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Time's Cover Story

Volume IV. No. 10
January 25, 1975

"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"

2 Cor. 4:13

MANY hope and pray that Missouri will take decisive steps, in the interests of all its members, at its convention in Anaheim this summer to achieve reconciliation or, if that is not possible, to bring to a satisfactory conclusion the dispute it lives through so disruptively.

The December 30 issue of *Time* carries a cover story which any Missourian aware of the events in his church the past decade must have turned to before he read anything else in its pages; *The Bible: The Believers Gain*.

Missouri's controversy, as *Time* accurately records, recently split a 90-year-old congregation in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, "Its liberal-leaning pastor, who quit under pressure from his deacons for his scriptural views, is being followed into exile by 50 of Trinity's families, with whom he is forming a new congregation."

This clergyman, The Rev. Richard Osing, 41, "... made it clear that he doubted that Jonah or Adam and Eve were historical and that Jesus turned water into wine."

Phil Beck, the church's Sunday School superintendent, explained, "The Lutheran Church has always been based on the Bible. If you start questioning it, where do you stop? If I have to have that much education to sit down and understand *Genesis*, then why did God ever let Luther put it in the people's language? At what point do I throw the whole mad mess out of the door? And at what point will my children throw it away?"

TIME continues, "*The plea of that Cedar Rapids father is at the heart of the Biblical controversy today, for he represents millions of Christians and Jews. His concern is a basic, agonizing one for any believer: How do you preserve faith in the Bible in a world that seems increasingly faithless?*" (Italics added)

Time's eight-page story on this question should forever disabuse any thoughtful Missourian of several ideas, which seem to persist among so many of us: that its struggle is merely a political one and a matter of personalities or that it is a recondite struggle among theologians which has no practical bearing on the layman, his future, and the future of the church.

Time gives Missouri's tensions a perspective and breadth of interpretation not found as often as they should be in the press. It points out that the Roman Church now undergoes the same debate and that Jewish religious thought also struggles with the same questions of the truth or inaccuracy and untruthfulness of the Old Testament.

Time points out explicitly also that the Presbyterian Church has lately faced the issue and split, but what *Time* is not explicit about (though it is implicit in the whole story) is that most of Protestantism has long since passed through this debate, that most of it has, as a result, lost the great basics of the Christian faith, turned toward a social gospel which sweeps aside the message of salvation as God formulated it in John 3:16, and that, as a result, the liberal sector of Protestantism has declined.

IT could be argued that if Pastor Osing personally doesn't believe in the factualness of the Jonah story, e.g., this in itself—did he accept the rest of the Word as Lutherans traditionally have—would be a small matter in the long and great history of the church, and that this blind spot (or whatever you might want to name it) in him wouldn't jeopardize his own salvation.

But that isn't the argument. The argument is precisely what his former layman said it was: If you once start questioning the Bible, where do you stop? All liberal Protestantism has answered the layman's question with a century of American history: you stop wherever you feel like stopping. You unravel, if not at first, then in the next and next generations, the whole fabric of Christian beliefs.

That's the argument, and it's unanswerable by the liberals, simply because all Protestant history offers fact after fact to show that this has invariably happened.

Sincere people in Missouri, whose integrity must be respected, believe that they can use the Historical-Critical Method with "Lutheran presuppositions" and not go down the hill down which Protestantism has gone. But we already have, not just the track record of Protestantism or of Jewry; we already have had extreme statements about fundamental Lutheran beliefs in our own midst.

Once the Bible no longer is accepted at face value for what it claims to be, the inerrant Word of God, there is no satisfactory test as to what part of it is His Word and what has been interpolated and is mistaken.

(It is fascinating that on two occasions the *Time* article points up the fact that research is proving the accuracy of Biblical statements. At one place, it states, "Noting one example among many, New Testament Scholar Bruce Metzger observes that the *Book of Acts* was once accused of historical errors for details that have since been proven by archeologists and historians to be correct.")

IN its conclusion *Time* states that men can demythologize the miraculous and explain the marvel, but that "the persistent message of the Bible will not go away. Both in the Jewish and Christian Bibles it is irreducible: some time, some where, God intervened in history to help man. Whether it was at the time of the Exodus... the Incarnation or the Resurrection or any of those many smaller interventions... *ordinary human history was interrupted, and has never been the same since.*" (Italics added)

The conservatives say simply and fully: it was all of these occasions and many more; it was all the occasions recorded in the Bible, and God's intervention includes the writing of the Sacred Record itself.

Any lesser interpretation of it violates the Word, its meaning, and its purpose: the revelation of the grace of God in Christ Jesus for the saving of mankind in the world to come!

That we confess and believe.

That we must act on at Anaheim!

“Two Irreconcilable Positions”: Seminex Prof

WHEN Synod's Board for Higher Education suggested to the Boards of Control of both synodical seminaries that Seminex men within by-law limitations be considered for faculty openings, the St. Louis Board of Control promptly appointed a committee to approach Seminex representatives regarding arrangements for doctrinal discussions.

Out of these committee meetings came agreement for a discussion group, "The Committee of 20," which would include representatives of the administration, faculty, and students from Concordia Seminary and from Seminex, Board for Higher Education, New Orleans Committee No. 3, Seminary Board of Control, and Synod's Board of Directors, plus the synodical president.

The agenda called for a discussion in the first meeting, held October 2nd, of New Orleans Resolution 3-09, titled "To declare faculty majority position in violation of Article II of the Constitution." This major resolution of the synodical convention is required reading for anyone interested in understanding the St. Louis Seminary problem. After a historical introduction, the resolution analyzes three major areas of doctrinal errors. Then, in the actual four-part resolution (the "Resolveds"), Synod reasserted its long-held doctrinal position with regard to seven specific matters, stating that they are indeed taught in the Scripture and are, therefore, doctrines to be believed, taught and confessed.

THE seven doctrines are: "Facticity of miracle accounts and their details; historicity of Adam and Eve as real persons; the fall of Adam and Eve into sin as a real event, to which original sin and its imputation upon all succeeding generations of mankind must be traced; the historicity of every detail in the life of Jesus as recorded by the evangelists; predictive prophecies in the Old Testament which are in fact Messianic; the doctrine of angels; the Jonah account."

The October 2nd meeting somehow started with the Jonah account and never moved beyond it. But it became quite apparent in the day-long session that there were two opposing views of 3-09.

Following the meeting, Seminex representative, Professor Andrew Weyermann, put his impressions into a 7-page document titled "Two Irreconcilable Positions," stating that the October 2nd meeting "revealed that there are two diametrically opposite interpretations regarding the meaning and implementation of Resolution 3-09."

The synodical view, according to Prof. Weyermann, sees 3-09 as "a valid and necessary indictment of the theological position of the former faculty majority which is in violation of the doctrinal standard of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. . . ."

A "radically opposite stance" was that of the six Seminex representatives who see 3-09 as "an indictment of the Synod in convention and the synodical administration" and believe that 3-09 "used a standard of doctrine that was unlutheran and sectarian."

Prof. Weyermann sees "the ingredients that make up these two dominant irreconcilable positions" as follows:

SYNOD'S POSITION: 1. Res. 3-09 was "proper and valid action for a convention of synod to take" because it condemns a position, not people, and therefore does not violate Synod's constitutional provisions for due process. 2. Since 3-09 is an indictment of the faculty majority's position as being in violation of the confessional standard of Synod, any former faculty member would "have to clear himself by affirming without reservation what 3-09 affirms and rejecting what 3-09 rejects." 3. Res. 3-09 is a valid solution to the controversy with the former faculty majority. "The synod has spoken."

The SEMINEX POSITION Prof. Weyermann details as follows: 1. Res. 3-09 "is a convention action in violation of the procedures for evangelical discipline clearly outlined in the Synod's Constitution and by-laws." 2. Res. 3-09 "is an indictment of the Synod in Convention and the Synodical Administration" because "it seeks to resolve theological differences in the LCMS by majority vote. . . ." A doctrinal matter passed by Synod cannot be "made a matter of conscience for anyone else in the synod." 3. "Resolution 3-09 establishes a doctrinal standard that the former faculty majority must adhere to without reservation that is in violation of the true confessional standard of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod."

HAVING outlined the two opposing views, Prof. Weyermann offered several concluding comments. First, he felt that the discussion "indicated clearly how serious the problem is." Secondly, he now "had a clearer view as to why we were in exile and a stronger commitment as to why in the present situation we must remain in exile." Thirdly, he sees a "demonic spirit" at work and states that "as long as God allows" Seminex "shall wrestle against the divisive presence in the synodical vineyard."

The validity of Prof. Weyermann's preliminary evaluation was borne out by the second "Committee of 20" meeting on October 22. His prediction that "further discussion may bring them (the issues) into even sharper focus" came true.

The discussion ranged over all seven doctrines listed in Resolution 3-09. The Seminex men made themselves abundantly clear, if such additional clarity were needed, regarding two major points. First, they do not believe that all seven doctrines listed by Synod in 3-09 are indeed doctrines, that is, matters clearly taught in the Bible. Secondly, they do not believe that Synod in convention has a right to take a doctrinal position, to state what it hears Scripture to be saying at any given point.

Professor Weyermann has performed a real service in his perceptive analysis of the two positions. His judgment that they are indeed "two irreconcilable positions" is valid. The sooner the entire Synod realizes this, the better for all of us.

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The Importance and Necessity of Sound Doctrine

THE Two Epistles of Timothy and The Epistle of Titus are usually grouped together and designated as The Pastoral Letters. This term is not strictly appropriate, yet sufficiently warranted by the fact that they consist largely of counsels to those in charge of ministerial duties. Although I and II Timothy and Titus are addressed to individuals, the nature and importance of the subject matter dealt therein make these epistles of interest to all members of the church. St. Paul scarcely anticipated their mission to end in private reception. In these three letters are to be found directions from the pen of Paul for organizing, training, and governing Christian congregations, together with the proper treatment of various groups comprising a congregation; old and young, widows and virgins, backsliders and heretics. While the Pastoral Epistles should logically be of special interest to theological professors, synodical officials, pastors, and teachers, lay-Christians, however, should likewise be concerned with their reading and study because of the many directives specifically addressed to them regarding the administration of the church. Lay people should, furthermore, be well versed in their contents because these epistles provide a divine rule by which to measure and evaluate a pastor's and a teacher's work.

Purpose of Pastoral Letters

The purpose of the three Pastoral Letters may be said to be twofold: to caution and to confirm; to warn against false teaching in its many forms and to encourage Timothy and Titus, and every minister, teacher and lay Christian to abide in the truth and live a holy life.

Three matters seem to receive special emphasis in these letters to Timothy and Titus: the organization, the doctrine and the life of the Christian Church. According to Professor Erdman, church organization holds first place in I Timothy; sound doctrine in II Timothy; and the promotion of a consistent Christian life in Titus. These three subjects are related and the order of their arrangement is logical, for church government is a means to an end, and only serves its purpose when sound doctrine is achieved; sound doctrine in turn must result in Christian living.

Sound Doctrine Accent

One of the distinctive features of the three Pastoral Letters is their emphasis on "soundness of doctrine." The stress of the Pastoral Epistles on sound doctrine has been noticed by a number of students and writers on the three Pauline Pastorals. *The Westminster Edition of the Bible* quotes as its summarizing caption for the Pastoral Letters the words: "Take heed unto thyself and the doctrine." According to Professor Erdmans: "Exhortation to sound doctrine constitutes the main burden of the Pastoral Letters as a whole." Professor Knox claimed that the major interest of the Pastoral Epistles is to be found in the stress they place upon "soundness of doctrine." Other scholars have also recognized this emphasis upon "sound doctrine."

In the Pastoral Epistles the words "teaching" and "doctrine" are used synonymously. In the Greek of the New Testament these two words are represented by two different words (*didaskalia*, occurring 15 times and *didache*, used two times). In the New

Testament either term may have reference to one unit of teaching presentation, or either term is employed to designate a section or body of teaching. When the word "teaching" or "doctrine" is found in the Pastoral Letters, in thirteen places, it refers to a body of teaching, and not primarily to one single doctrine or teaching. White, in *The Expositor's Greek New Testament*, claims that the word "doctrine" refers to the body of apostolic doctrine. In a number of passages the word "faith" in the Pastoral writings is used objectively, in the sense of "that which is the object or content of belief." The words "faith" and "doctrine" are employed in the Pastoral Letters to designate the sum total of Christian belief.

A number of implications flow from this emphasis on sound doctrine in the three letters dating from a few years before Paul's death at the hands of Nero in Rome. The fact that there are at least thirteen references to having and promoting sound doctrine is significant. Bible-believing Christians accept a truth if it is stated only once in the Word of God. However, when a truth is frequently repeated, its importance becomes obvious. In nine passages the apostolic doctrine is described as being "sound," in another as "good," in another as being according to "godliness," and in one as "the teaching of God our Savior."

Results of Sound Doctrine

The word used in the Greek New Testament stresses the idea of doctrine being healthy and not sickly. False or erroneous teaching or doctrine is unhealthy, promotes spiritual sickness, yes, in some cases spiritual death. Thus it is imperative that the teaching or doctrine proclaimed and taught in the churches be healthy, sound, which alone is able to promote true spiritual growth, something which false or unhealthy doctrine is unable to accomplish.

The importance of soundness of doctrine is further shown by the fact that its possession and proper use can result in everlasting life while its non-possession or abuse is everlasting condemnation. Thus Paul admonished Timothy: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (I Timothy 4:16). The serious predicament befalling those who forsook or denied the healthy or sound doctrine is clearly set forth in the following passages: "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and the oppositions of science falsely so called: which some professing have erred concerning the faith" (I Timothy 6:20-21). Again: "But shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus; who concerning the truth of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some" (II Timothy 2:16-18). When Paul described the opponents of Timothy and Titus as people in need of being "freed from the snare of the devil under whom they had been taken captive to do his will," Paul thereby indicated the dire consequences of those who forsook the truth.

Accept All Bible Doctrines

A reading of the Pastoral Letters reveals that God expects His children to adhere to all doctrines and teaching, irrespective of whether they are classified as fundamental or non-fundamental

(Continued on Page 8)

The Right Of The Congregation

ONE Of the duties that our Lord Christ has given to His Church is the defense of the truth of the Gospel. That the Fathers of the Lutheran Church realized this can be seen in how much the Lutheran Confessions are involved in such a defense. Nor can one for long read the New Testament without feeling the burden of defending the truth of the words of our Lord as we are about the task of speaking and confessing the Gospel. And while one can understand the motive behind the declaration, "We don't need to defend the Gospel, for the Gospel will defend itself," for no one desires controversy, we cannot understand the ignorance behind such a statement. For not only is there a need to defend the Gospel in the midst of our proclaiming it, there is also the apostolic injunction to do so. To give the impression that the Christian is free from such a task because of some pious thought that the Gospel will take care of itself because of its own power is like saying that the Christian is freed from the task of proclaiming the Gospel because it will take care of proclaiming itself by its own power. Any such impression given is a disservice to God's people to whom the Lord has given the task of both proclaiming and defending the Gospel. It would make senseless the many admonitions of our Lord in the New Testament to guard against error which attempts to destroy the Gospel (such as Matthew 7:15ff.). And such an impression that it is not necessary to guard the truth of the Gospel can be seriously entertained only if one is unconcerned about the Gospel and its unique saving authority and power.

Christians and Controversy

Defending the truth of something always implies controversy, controversy resulting from the fact that there are those who are attacking the truth. Were there no such attacks against the truth, there would be no need to defend the truth and no resulting controversy. We ought not to forget that controversy does not result from a defense of the truth. Rather it comes from those who are out to destroy the truth and its resulting freedom. Of course if no one takes up the defense of the truth, no controversy would come about. Nevertheless, the resulting controversy is not due to any defense of the truth but rather to those who are attacking it. But no matter the controversy or the cost when the Gospel is under attack, it is a duty of each Christian congregation to bear the burden of defending this precious message and truth.

The New Testament lays it upon every Christian to take up such a defense of the truth of the Gospel. We are told so by an apostolic injunction given, for instance, in the Epistle of Jude. The Apostle Jude in this epistle urges his readers to take up the task of contending for the faith because of the attack of certain men who were out to set aside the grace of God and the Lord Jesus Christ (verses 3 and 4). He speaks of the faith as something that can be identified and recognized which was once and for all handed down to them (verse 3). They know this faith, for it had been carefully taught them and given to them as a sacred trust. This faith, this doctrine of the Gospel could not be altered, added to or taken from. It was inviolate and whole. Any tampering with this faith that spelled out the Gospel, which they had received and by which they were saved, was a setting aside of the grace of God and a setting aside of Jesus Christ.

False Teachers Intolerable

After identifying the marks of such false teachers Jude concludes his epistle by telling his readers how they were to contend for the Gospel in their defense of it. They were to do so by building themselves up in their most holy faith, by praying in the Holy Spirit, by keeping themselves in the love of God, by waiting for (anticipating) the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ which was bringing to them eternal life, by showing mercy to those who had doubts (to the weak and wavering in the faith) while trying to save them from the fire, and to those who were attacking the Gospel they were to be merciful in fear while hating their evil works (verses 20 through 23).

That there was to be a conclusion to the Christian defending the truth of the Gospel against false teachers—that they were not to tolerate forever the false teacher but that he either repent or be put out of the Christian fellowship—can be seen from Paul's apostolic instruction to Titus concerning such a false teacher. He tells Titus that after the heretical man has been warned a first and a second time he is to stand off, separate himself from him (Titus 3:10). That this was a practice of Paul is witnessed by the way Paul and his fellow Christians separated themselves from those who continued to speak against the faith (Acts 19:8-9, see also Romans 16:17-18, I Timothy 6:1-16, I Corinthians 5:9-13, II Corinthians 6:14-7:1).

All Christians Defend the Faith

It is not only the duty of pastors and teachers to defend the faith. It is also the obligation of all Christians. The instruction of our Lord Christ in Matthew 7:15ff. to know and guard against false teachers is laid upon all Christians, not just the apostles—this can be seen from the passage itself and also from the entire context in the Sermon on the Mount. In Paul's epistle to the Christians of Galatia it is the entire body of believers, the congregations, that he urges to hold fast to the Gospel that he, Paul, had taught them (Galatians 1:6-10). They the congregations together with their pastors were to judge the false teachers and the "other" Gospel they were teaching. In the Good Shepherd chapter of John, chapter ten—a chapter that Luther so often quotes and uses—the Lord Christ speaks of how His flock knows no other voice than that of its Lord. His people are not to follow the word of another; yea, they are to flee from such (verse 5). Certainly it can be said that a pastor who encourages the members of a congregation to follow any other voice is the thief spoken of in verses one through ten and is also the hireling spoken of in verses twelve and thirteen. Christ describes such false pastors, such thieves and hirelings as ones who only care for themselves and who are out to destroy His sheep by attempting to take them away from the word of the true Shepherd (verses 5 and 10). The flock of Jesus Christ has the authority to judge the teaching and doctrine of its pastors and teachers. They also have the authority as they judge the teaching of their pastors to turn away from a false shepherd who is attempting to persuade them to follow him instead of listening only to the word of the true Shepherd—which word he the under shepherd should be teaching but isn't. Certainly this is a proper function of all Christians in defending the truth of the Gospel.

To Defend The Gospel

Supervision of Pastors

Does the Bible anywhere speak of a supervision of pastors to help both the congregations and the pastors to remain true to the Gospel? What can a congregation do when it is convinced that their pastor is not teaching according to the truth of the Faith? While we can not picture completely the organization of the congregations in the Early Church, we can note that there was careful attention given to the supervision of public teachers in the congregations. How this supervision was carried out we are not told, but that there was some kind of supervision or at least attention given to it is seen in the pastoral epistles. Paul for instance in Titus Chapters One and Two encourages Titus to appoint only sound men as elders and public teachers in the congregations (1:5ff.). He was to supervise the public teaching and lives of the pastors and teachers in such a way that only healthy teaching would be taught (2:1ff.). Again in II Timothy 1:3ff. Paul instructs the young missionary, Timothy to make certain that only true teaching be taught by the public teachers in the congregations. He tells Timothy, "I want you to stay in Ephesus, just as I urged you when I was on my way to Macedonia. Some people there are teaching false doctrines, and you must order them to stop . . . They want to be teachers of God's law, but they do not understand their own words or the matters about which they speak with so much confidence." (I Timothy 1:3 and 7—TEV). Throughout the pastoral epistles there is this concern of the Apostle Paul that only sound teachers proclaim the Gospel so that the public teaching of the Faith be not tarnished but be kept pure and undefiled (see I Timothy 4:1ff., 6:2ff., II Timothy 3:1ff.).

This concern of Paul for the absolute truth of the Gospel is always motivated by a holy awe and sense of the honor of Christ and by a deep feeling of love and care for people in the saving grace of God. Paul was driven by the singular awareness that the only way a sinner, Jew or Gentile, could ever come to God was by Jesus Christ, and that the only way mankind could receive the hope of salvation in Christ was through the word of the Gospel which alone by the Spirit could work faith (Romans 10:5-21, Hebrews 4:1-2). Paul's jealousy of the true Gospel of Christ would not permit any change or altering of it whatsoever, for he knew that any doubt cast upon the Gospel, its truthfulness, its power to save, its uniqueness as the only way to salvation would deny people the certainty of God's mercy and salvation (Galatians 1:6ff., 5:1ff., I Corinthians 2:1ff.). And in this concern Paul would tolerate no denial or even hint of denial of the truth and glory of the Gospel articulated by the word of God (see for instance Paul's dispute with Peter which occasions his beautiful witness to the Gospel, Galatians 2:11-21; see also Acts 20:28ff.).

Congregation's Authority From Bible

What is the standard by which a congregation, in its authority to defend the truth of the Gospel, is to judge the public teaching of its pastor? It is of course the word of God, the Bible. All authority that the congregation exercises in this or any other matter comes from the Bible, and that same Bible is to be the standard of any judging of the teaching of its pastor. In the Sermon on the Mount our Lord tells His followers in warning them

about false teaching that they would recognize a false teaching by its fruits (Matthew 7:15ff.). What a pastor of a congregation does and teaches and the results of his public life and teaching is to be compared to the Bible. His public life and teaching must ring true with what the Bible teaches. To help congregations make this comparison, to help them in their use of the Bible as the standard of judging all Christian doctrine and life, we have established in the Lutheran Church a set of confessions which are collected in the *Book of Concord* (the official body of the Lutheran teachings known as the Lutheran Confessions). These Lutheran Confessions and the spirit in which and for which they were written have been set up in our Lutheran Church as a guide to help congregations to be certain that their pastors are teaching according to the word of God. Any pastor who does not teach accordingly has given up the right of any longer being a public teacher of the church and a pastor of a congregation. And it is to the congregation that the Lord Christ has given the authority to exercise this right of calling and disposing of pastors.

By apostolic authority the congregations are to defend the truth of the Gospel in their work of publicly proclaiming the Gospel, they are entrusted with the authority to judge the doctrine of their pastors, and they are under apostolic injunction in the Bible to call and establish only such pastors who will proclaim the Gospel according to its truth as articulated by the Apostolic Faith found in the word of God, the Bible. Such authority includes the apostolic direction to dispose all such pastors who do not adhere to the true doctrine of the Gospel. To help congregations in this God-given task there is apostolic guidance from the Bible to have such a supervision that will encourage, instruct, and defend the congregations in their work of proclaiming and defending the Gospel.

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Congregations and other groups may order copies of *Affirm* at the bulk rate of \$4.00 per hundred. This price includes postage and handling. Single copies are 10 cents each.

On The News Front

THE Sem's new publication, *Concordia Journal*, arrived the other day, another happy sign that Missouri inches her way back to normalcy; the *Journal* reflects the kind of solid theological thinking which, till recently, marked Missouri's history. *Affirm* prays that under God this publication will strengthen Missouri for the years ahead! Reading the history of how it was "born of anguish and travail" as well as reading its articles proved a moving experience; Missouri had found its home again!

LAST November the Sem's Board of Control adopted a resolution "... that it is contrary to the policy of Concordia Seminary to provide any supportive services or facilities to Seminex or to any of its faculty, staffs, or students." It reasoned that Seminex violates good order in the church and in its ministry, that it competes with Synod's ministerial training program, hurts Synod's finances, has not contributed to synodical reconciliation, illegally appropriates the name and identity of the Sem, and publicly condemns the Sem. A copy of the full resolution and the facts supporting it can be obtained by writing Concordia Seminary, 801 De Mun Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri, 63105.

THE roster of district publications which stand for the conservative position continues to grow; *Affirm* wishes them God's richest blessing in their witness to the truths of His Word and the grace in Christ Jesus! It is heartening to know that so many people willingly put so much time and effort into standing up for our Lord Jesus Christ!

WHAT lies ahead?

The Lutheran Forum in its January 1975 issue gives a clue about the future plans of dissidents. "Selected congregations from around the country will set up what is described as a 'standby corporation' to serve as an interim and uniting 'support system' for congregations forced out in the event of the Synod's formal division. ELIM is discouraging parishes from going completely independent or moving directly into the ALC or LCA. Some see the non-geographical English District or ELIM itself as interim bodies. However it happens, the hope is that, come a formal division, there will be coordinated effort to keep hundreds of congregations together to play a catalytic role in the realignment, probably along regionalized lines, of American Lutheranism."

No one needs to read between the lines to grasp the course the liberal-leaning clergy and some of their congregations are pursuing.

E VANGELIUM/GOSPEL, an international Lutheran theological periodical published under the auspices of the Lutheran Hour at Bremen, will appear six times a year with articles on mission and evangelism; all articles will appear in both German and English. You may subscribe (\$10 a year; students, \$8) by writing Verlag Stelten GmbH, 2862 Worpswede, Otterstein 12, Westdeutschland. This international effort to undergird missions contains pertinent and interesting articles.

THE Association of Theological Schools has elected Seminex to associate membership, despite apparent discrepancies between the rules of the Association and the current status of this school. Some of the arguments against any Seminex membership in the ATS include: the fact that by its name it stands in opposition to our own Sem; it has not yet passed the test of permanence and stability; it lacks basic educational resources; and it is not in good standing with several neighboring and accredited theological schools. Presumably proper representations about this matter are being made to the ATS and the whole issue will be resolved according to standard procedures.

On The News Front

THE highly-advertised Convocation, scheduled to take place in April with some 300 key leaders of Missouri present in a massive effort to heal the breach within Missouri, could by the grace of God take effective first steps toward lowering the tensions at Anaheim and resolving the issues which long have troubled the church. *Affirm* hopes and prays that it will succeed. But the list of efforts which have already failed or which seem to be making no progress (at least publicly) continues to lengthen. Synod's Board of Directors didn't succeed; the Committee of 20 (see an article elsewhere in this issue) seems to be going nowhere; and no optimistic statements have so far been made as to the progress of the Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Conciliation or the Five and Five group. Meanwhile, the *Forum* talks about a "standby corporation" created to help dissident clergy and congregations. Will the Convocation, in the light of this history, also fail? Whether it does or doesn't, no one can ever accuse synodical officials of not trying to reconcile the different elements in Missouri! On balance, the Convocation seems worth the effort. Pray God it succeeds!

DAY By Day We Magnify Thee, Devotional Writings of Martin Luther, contributed and arranged by Norman Sykes (published in Great Britain by the Epworth Press, London, England), from page 384 *Truth Is More Important Than Unity*:

" 'For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.' 2 Corinthians, ch. 13. v. 8.

"This is so great a good that no human heart can grasp it (therefore it necessitates such a great and hard fight). It must not be treated lightly, as the world maintains and many people who do not understand, saying we should not fight so hard about an article and thus trample on Christian love; rather, although we err on one small point, if we agree on everything else, we should give in and overlook the difference in order to preserve brotherly and Christian unity and fellowship.

"No, my dear man, do not recommend to me peace and unity when thereby God's Word is lost, for then eternal life and everything else would be lost. In this matter there can be no yielding nor giving way, no, not for love of you or any other person, but everything must yield to the Word, whether it be friend or foe. The Word was given unto us for eternal life and not to further outward peace and unity. The Word and doctrine will create Christian unity or fellowship. Where they reign all else will follow. Where they are not, no concord will ever abide. Therefore do not talk to me about love and friendship, if that means breaking with the Word, or the faith, for the Gospel does not say love brings eternal life, God's grace, and all heavenly treasures, but the Word."

Sermons from the year 1531.

W. S. 34. 11. 387

Editorial Policy

While the articles in *Affirm* with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

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Sound Doctrine . . .

(Continued from Page 3)

teachings. While it is true that a person can be saved without a knowledge of those doctrines not directly related to the plan of salvation, God's Word does not permit a deliberate rejection of these teachings that do not directly affect the distinction between Law and Gospel. There are those in our Synod and other Lutheran bodies in the United States who claim that as long as an interpretation of a given text or texts does not deny that men are sinners (Law) and that they are saved by the precious blood of Christ (Gospel), the reinterpretation or non-acceptance of non-fundamental doctrines is permissible. This, of course, would mean that human beings sit in judgment on the revealed wisdom of God as set forth in Holy Writ, accepting or rejecting what does not suit them.

But such a stance is not permissible according to the Pastoral Epistles as well as other passages in the Scriptures. Congregations, pastors, teachers, and laymen should be vitally interested in wholesome, healthy doctrine because the latter alone can nourish and foster Christian living. There is an intimate relationship between sound, wholesome doctrine and Christian living. Although the Pastoral Letters contain numerous references to the necessity of teaching and proclaiming sound doctrine, they also stress the truth that correct doctrine must result in piety and in godly living. Thus Paul emphasized the value of *all Scripture* (including the Old Testament) as useful for doctrine, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Timothy 3:17). In Titus 2:11-14, called "The Epiphany of Grace," Paul asserted: "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously in this present world" (Titus 2:12-13). The importance of sound doctrine for ethical living is emphasized in the entire second chapter of Titus.

Lay Responsibility

The Pastoral Epistles also stress the duty of both pastors and laity to be sound in doctrine. Thus Paul encouraged Timothy to be an excellent minister, one who continues nurturing himself by the words of faith and of excellent doctrine (I Timothy 4:6). In writing to Titus, Paul listed as one of the duties of a bishop that

he "be a man holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" (Titus 1:9). In the same chapter, Titus was told to rebuke the Cretans sharply "that they may be sound in the faith" (1:13). The purpose of instruction by Titus should be to produce men "sound in the faith" (Titus 2:2).

It is not in agreement with Pauline teaching to limit the content of Christian doctrine which must be held unconditionally to just a few important teachings and doctrines, but it includes every truth that God has clearly revealed in His inspired word. Ethical directives are also part and parcel of God's revelation to be taught and accepted.

Dr. Raymond F. Surburg
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"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13

Anaheim Issues

DAILY the Anaheim convention looms larger. Churchmen have correctly spoken of the crucial nature of each of Missouri's recent conventions, but Anaheim will likely prove decisive.

Despite the small tinge of ridicule about Missouri's "Disneyland" theology, which has appeared here and there in the liberal-leaning press, there is no fairytale way of looking at a meeting which likely will come to final grips with Missouri's theological tensions.

At the beginning of February President Preus spoke to 3,000 people at Arlington Heights, Illinois, and expressed what must be the feelings of Missourians generally across the nation.

The vast majority of them want the certainty that Missouri continues to carry out its tasks, as it has in the past, on the basis of the Word. That same majority is "battle weary" and wants peace, but it wants an honorable peace. And, instead of continuing to cover the same ground theologically, over which it has plodded repeatedly in varying forums for years now, Missouri wants to return to the program of evangelistic outreach which marked her great years of the past.

Nearly all the literature and letters which cross *Affirm's* desk enforce the President's analysis. Exceptions occur, of course; some, especially those with liberal leanings, apparently want to continue the theological debate which so far has been proven fruitless.

But again and again in the local publications of conservatives indications are given that Missourians want the issues settled so that the church can get on with its God-given tasks. Some of the major trends they express will be sampled at random on other pages of this issue of *Affirm*.

Resolutions concerning these issues already proposed, moreover, have been prepared and circulated.

THE growing feeling is that three or four major matters must be finally resolved at Anaheim. By grace they will be.

In whatever form the District publications and the resolutions state it, they essentially agree that *Seminex must be abolished*. Of course, Missouri can't prevent the *Seminex* group from continuing to function, if it chooses to do so, but it can determine to break off all relations with it, continue to refuse recognition to its graduates as candidates for Missouri's ministry, and generally shut a firm door on this unhappy episode in Missouri's history.

Many suggest that the *Seminex* faculty disband, that it give up its status as a corporation, and that Synod deal in love with those who want to return, on a Scriptural basis, to its ministry in one form or another.

There is further concern over the placement of *Seminex* graduates. Some of them have been installed as pastors in a disorderly manner, judging by the principles men agree to

when they join the Synod. Some have met with our own Sem's officials and fulfilled the requirements for approval as candidates for Missouri's ministry. What will happen to others, about to graduate, remains to be seen. The original agreement in the Council of Presidents was that, because of unusual circumstances, only 1974 graduates could, under certain circumstances, enter Missouri's ministry. It was clearly understood that the 1974 exception would not apply to the 1975 *Seminex* class. At the moment the situation appears confused and, perhaps to an outsider, almost chaotic. Missouri badly needs the matter settled; it has two seminaries and doesn't need a third unofficial school confusing the Synod with its unrecognized graduates.

A growing consensus exists that *Synod must deal with the question of District Presidents*, their role, and the disobedience of some to her by-laws. Missouri can't afford an array of these men proceeding to act officially as they choose. Anaheim, at a minimum if Synod is to be restored to that decency and order the Scriptures call for, must ask erring presidents to apologize to the church, to undo their mistakes, to promise to end their practice of by-passing the regulations all Missourians have commonly agreed to; and it must create a means whereby those who refuse to act in this way can be removed from office by Synod's President. Without that, we will suffer ecclesiastical anarchy.

Last July *Affirm* carried an analysis of what had happened at District conventions around the country. It reported that the large Michigan District had memorialized the Anaheim convention to make it a synodical policy that "all who continue their active support for ELIM be declared ineligible for synodical office or divine call into the preaching and teaching ministries of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod."

This request to act decisively on ELIM adherents will come before the convention as will similar requests. That ELIM has become a church within a church is commonplace among Missourians today. And as long as ELIM exists, it will present Missouri a serious problem.

But ELIM seems to pose special problems to the convention. Evidence exists that some who hold ELIM membership have not joined it because they hold the radical theological beliefs that others in ELIM do. In some cases group loyalty, a very mild moderate deviation in theology, or a variety of other factors, may have led to affiliation with ELIM.

Anaheim will need great wisdom in dealing with the ELIM issue; pray God, it will muster it.

These are among the central Anaheim issues; they must be faced and dealt with in love and firmly.

Scharlemann on 801 Developments

The Rev. William T. Eggers, editor of AFFIRM, interviewed Dr. Martin Scharlemann, a member of the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., concerning recent Seminary history and the achievements of the school currently.

Eggers: More than a year has passed since the walkout of the faculty majority from Concordia Seminary. As you look back over all that has happened since then, what would be some of your reflections?

Scharlemann: You have me on something of a difficult spot. Somebody is bound to read into anything I say possible overtones of invidious comparison. So let me start by saying that any comments made are to be read and understood as attempts at accentuating the positive. Any references to the past are made only for the purpose of greater intelligibility and appreciation of the present.

First off, Bill, I would want to underline the heroic aspects of those individuals that were willing to accept calls to the Seminary when their predecessors chose to leave. These men left the comparative security and calm of parish life, for the most part, to accept positions that would expose them to much criticism and many hazards. Most of them had to take a serious cut in income, too. This bothers me no end, because it is so unfair to have men with such training work at salary levels far below the paychecks written out, let us say, for people who work at "500."

E.: How, Martin, did you find men who would come?

S.: That is an interesting facet of this whole enterprise. When the walkout took place, I suddenly had, as the Acting President of the Seminary, to develop a list and a procedure for getting a new faculty together. To my astonishment, I discovered that no agency in Synod could offer any help in terms of supplying names and personnel data of significance. So I went through the graduation programs for the ten years previous to look at the names of persons who had done a Th.D. or an S.T.M. degree. At the same time, Dr. Robert Preus, the VP for Academic Affairs, and I racked our brains trying to remember individuals whom we might consider. That is actually how our first working list was put together.

E.: But, of course, that was only the beginning, Martin?

S.: Yes, Bill; and at that point we discovered what a complicated procedure it is to follow the steps outlined in the Handbook for calling a person to the Seminary. For a time, it looked for all the world as though we couldn't possibly man our stations by the fall of last year. But here the Board of Control was willing to be as helpful as possible. So was President Preus. The members of the Board of Higher Education, too, saw the emergency for what it was. And they all arranged their schedules accordingly.

E.: How have these new men worked out?

S.: Well, Bill, this is one of the most heart-warming facets of this whole enterprise. I've said a number of times to people, like yourself, who have asked me that question, "What wonderful people we would have missed if the men of the new faculty had never had a chance to come!"

E.: But I notice that some of them have had no previous experience in teaching at the Seminary level.

S.: But don't forget these men have come from the parish. They have brought a new dimension to instruction by virtue of that very fact. When they are in the classroom, they have at their fingertips a wealth of experience in the pastoral ministry that

they can tap for illustrations and applications. One of the results in the student body has been a much keener interest in getting out into the parish ministry rather than into some special kind of work.

E.: Is that the only big change you see in the stance of the students?

S.: No; there is one more. We have, proportionately speaking, a larger number of men who have been in other types of work. They have, in some instances, been willing to leave their families at home—hundreds of miles away—to begin taking a full course, including the study of the Biblical languages—which, by the way, we still require before a person can begin work in Biblical interpretation. In a way, we have become more like the Springfield Seminary as a place for persons of delayed vocation. But we still keep insisting on the language requirements!

E.: Do you yourself feel any difference in the over-all climate for teaching, Martin?

S.: As you know, Bill, serving as the Acting President for the period of the moratorium and the walkout, with its consequences, brought me to the point of almost complete nervous exhaustion. I was not sure, therefore, when I returned from sick-leave whether I could actually manage to get through a quarter of teaching. But, as I told Vice President Weber a few weeks after the fall quarter started, "The old joy of teaching has come back. There are no longer any hidden agendas around here; and all the trap-doors seem to be gone." In point of fact, I can't imagine a place more conducive to healing from such a collapse than the present climate, created by a different kind of student body and the open administration of Dean Klotz and Acting President Bohlmann. I must quickly add that this became possible because Dr. Robert Preus was ready and able to take over the responsibilities of guiding the Seminary for those crucial weeks between my becoming ill and the appointment of Dr. Ralph Bohlmann as Acting President. Both our Church and the Seminary community are much indebted to him for the work he did during those incredible days.

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Pastor and People — 1975

IN sailing the narrow Strait of Messina between the Italian coast and the island of Sicily, ancient mariners had to steer a straight and careful course to avoid shipwreck via either Scylla, a rocky point on the mainland, or Charybdis, a whirlpool near the Sicilian coast.

Such a Scylla and Charybdis are, on the one hand, a reckless insistence of a congregation that it has the right to do what it wants, and on the other, a papistical and autocratic church government.

A careful balance must be maintained between the autonomy of a congregation and the limitations voluntarily accepted by parishes as they walk together ("Syn-od").

For example, on its own a congregation has the right to call as pastor anyone it wishes. However, when a parish joins Synod it voluntarily agrees to certain standards and procedures. These include doctrinal qualifications, academic requirements, certification by one of our two Seminary faculties, and ordination authorized by a District President. These self-adopted requirements, understood and agreed to by all of us, are designed so that all things may be done decently and in order and that congregations may be assured of pastors who are sound in doctrine and competent for the ministry.

Thus, when a District President pleads "unusual times," "special conditions," and "love" as an excuse to authorize the ordination of an uncertified ministerial candidate, he has avoided what he considers the Scylla of rules, but only to fall into the Charybdis of a lawlessness, anarchy, and chaos which will guarantee the destruction of the Missouri Synod if not halted and corrected.

But a congregation has not fulfilled its responsibility when it has made sure that the man it calls to be its pastor has completed the required theological training at one of our two synodical seminaries and has been certified properly for ordination by one of those two faculties.

SEMINARY faculties can become infected with a liberal theology which, in effect, denies the verbal inspiration, validity and authority of the Bible. We saw this happen in other denominations, but somehow felt—may God forgive our pride!—that it could not happen to us.

Painful and sorrowful though it may be, we are slowly and surely accepting the fact that Bible-doubting professors have been sending Bible-doubting pastors into Missouri Synod pulpits.

"Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The Bible gives us the answer. Remember the Bereans in Acts 17:11? "Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so." We have always praised those laymen at least with lip-service. But we in the Missouri Synod check our pastors? Heaven forbid! It seemed unnecessary. It seemed to imply a lack of trust, and we were raised to trust our pastors!

BUT we have found out again, apparently just in time, that nothing in the Bible is irrelevant and that we must always be Bereans.

Dr. C. F. W. Walther, first president of our Synod and for many years president of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, never lost sight of this need for parishioners to check the pastors. Required reading is his tract, "The Sheep Judge Their Shepherds." (Scriptural Anchor Publications, P.O. Box 263, Yuba City, California, 95991).

Introductorily, Dr. Walther points out that the church "has from the beginning been a militant church . . . Also within the church at all times men have arisen who have spread false teachings . . . even in the apostolic church . . ." Why does God

permit this? "Two reasons especially are given by God's Word. God permits it partly to prove His children and partly to punish the unthankful hearers."

Dr. Walther makes four main points: "I show you: I. That the sheep are the judges; II. That therefore they shall know the true doctrine and be steadfast in it; III. That they must not let themselves be deceived by a mere good appearance; and finally IV. That they must above all look for the proper fruits."

A start at this unhappy but necessary judgment of the clergy of our times has been made in our Synod. An Oklahoma parish, finding its pastor out of harmony with Synod's doctrinal position, has forced the resignation of its pastor. A 1300 communicant parish in Black Jack, Missouri, in desperation simply passed a motion "to abolish the office of head pastor."

At New Orleans Synod adopted a doctrinal position statement ("A Statement") which deals especially with the doctrines presently in controversy among us. Congregations are beginning to study it and to use it (and New Orleans Resolution 3-09) as a check list. The sheep are starting to judge the shepherds. Praise God!

BUT back to Scylla and Charybdis. After 20 years or more we suddenly realize the peril of the Scylla of indifference and unthankfulness and the assumption that certainly no Missouri Synod pastor would or could go wrong. Laymen are beginning to do what God has said they should do. Pastors unfaithful to the Word of God and out of harmony with the doctrinal position of Synod must be admonished, corrected, and if necessary removed.

Conversely, when pastors are found to be faithful to God's Word, let congregations be faithful in attendance to their preaching and teaching of the Word, let them be grateful for God's gift of a faithful pastor, let them show him "double honor."

May God also preserve us from the Charybdis of unwarranted complaints and loveless criticism. In their frustration, laymen dare not fall into an irresponsible anti-clericalism which says, "Throw the rascal out" for whatever reason.

Our synodical constitution provides the proper balance when, in Article III, among the objectives of Synod it lists both "The supervision of the ministers and teachers of the Synod" and "The protection of pastors, teachers and congregations . . ." (Emphasis added)

"Dear friends, don't believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see if they are from God." I John 4:1.

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Quincy, Illinois

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Luther and Walther On Basic Principles

THE key issue in the controversies that at present are dividing and polarizing the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is that of the interpretation of Scripture. Differences regarding doctrine and ethics are ultimately a matter of Biblical interpretation. Since the Missouri Synod stands in the direct tradition of Luther (1483-1546) and C. F. W. Walther (1811-1887), it might be profitable to see what these two theological giants considered basic principles of Biblical interpretation. Luther's writings are replete with hundreds of statements about Biblical hermeneutics (interpretation). In his commentaries on many books of the Old and New Testaments and in his sermons the reader will find interpretative principles set forth and demonstrations given as to how the Bible should properly be interpreted. C. F. W. Walther has also indicated in his numerous writings the manner in which the Word of God should be understood. The observant reader will notice that there is a great similarity in the handling of Scriptures by Walther as compared with that of Luther, because Walther was a great student of the Wittenberg reformer and also because at one time in his life, Walther had taken out time assiduously to study Luther's writings. In his book, *The Lutheran Church the True Visible Church of God on Earth*, Walther set forth in summary fashion the basic rules of interpretation followed by the Lutheran Church, as can also be seen from a study of the Lutheran Confessions (Theses XVI-XXI).

Both Luther and Walther recognized the written Word of the prophets, evangelists and apostles as the only source and norm and judge of all teaching. They both rejected reason, tradition or new revelations. Both refused to bow before the scholarly consensus of their time; Luther did not eventually accept as authoritative the defined teaching of the magisterium of the church; Walther refused to bow before the consensus of views of rationalistic professors who controlled theological thinking at the prestigious German universities. In the Smalcald Articles Luther wrote: "The Word of God shall establish articles of faith and no one else, not even an angel" (II:2, *Concordia Triglotta*, p. 467). Like his German spiritual forefather, Walther took the identical position. The latter cited the following Scriptures in support of this position: Deut. 4:2; Josh. 23:6; Is. 8:20; Luke 16:29; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; 1 Cor. 2:4, 5, 15; Col. 2:8; Matt. 15:9. In Thesis XV Walther wrote: "The Evangelical Lutheran Church acknowledges no human interpreter, whose interpretation must be received as infallible and binding on account of his office, 1) not an individual, 2) not an order, 3) not a particular or general council; 4) not a whole church." (Wm. Dällmann et alii, *Walther and the Church*, p. 123).

No Errors In Bible

Both Luther and Walther repudiated the allegation that the Scriptures have errors in them. Luther wrote: "The Scriptures have never erred" (Weimar 15, 1481), or: "It is impossible that Scripture should contradict itself; it only appears to do so to senseless and obstinate hypocrites" (Weimar, 9, 356). C. F. W. Walther (*Lehre und Wehre*, 21:35) asserted: "Whoever believes with all his heart that the Bible is the Word of God cannot believe anything else than that it is inerrant." Again Walther wrote: "Whoever thinks that he can find one error in holy Scripture does not believe in holy Scripture but in himself for if he accepted everything else as true, he would believe it not because Scripture says so but because it agrees with his reason or his sentiments." (*Lehre und Wehre*, 14:4, translation in CTM, 10:4, p. 255).

The employers of the Historical-Critical Method claim that the Old and New Testament are full of contradictions, errors and mistakes. Such a stance attacks the reliability of the Word of God and definitely reflects on the authority of the Bible as God's inspired Word.

Luther and Walther held to the clearness or perspicuity of the Bible. Both of these German-born Biblical professors believed that Ps. 119:105 "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light to my path," or II Pet. 1:19, where the Word of God is called "a more sure Word, a light that shineth in a dark place" showed the clearness of the Scriptures. Luther asserted this in various writings (cf. St. L. Ed., 5:334; 18:1686 ff.) and Walther in Thesis XIV of *The Lutheran Church the True Visible Church*. For them there are no competing and contradictory Biblical theologies or a host of "open questions."

Bible Interprets Itself

Both Luther and Walther followed the Biblical principle that Scripture interprets Scripture. The only authentic expositor of the Bible is the Bible itself. Human reason, under the direction of the Holy Ghost, acts merely as the instrument through which the exposition takes place. In his writings Luther has written clearly on this principle (cf. Luther's Works (St. Ed.,) III, 1386; XI, 2335f.; XIII, 1899, 1909). Walther's Thesis XVI reads: "The Evangelical Lutheran Church accepts God's Word as it interprets itself." In a number of passages in the New Testament the Holy Spirit tells us that David, Isaiah, and Moses spoke about Jesus Christ many centuries prior to Jesus' birth. Jesus says that Abraham saw his days (John 8:56). John (12:41) states that Isaiah in chapter 6 saw the glory of Christ. The New Testament tells us clearly that in Old Testament times the coming of Christ, the establishment of the Messianic age and its blessings were foretold. Most proponents of the Historical-Critical Method deny these facts and assertions of the New Testament, thus refusing to recognize the principle that the Scripture interprets itself or that Scripture is to be used in the interpretation of the Scripture.

Luther and Walther both held that the literal sense was the primary sense of the text and that a text had only one intended sense. If a text of the Bible had a fourfold sense, as was held during the Middle Ages, an interpreter never could be certain what Scripture really taught. The same text cannot have one meaning in the Old Testament and a completely different sense in the New. Thus in Psalm 110, we read: "The Lord said to my lord: Sit at my right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool." Christ claimed that David was writing about Him, the Messiah (Matt. 22:41-46). Present-day critical Biblical scholarship claims that the original intention was completely different from the meaning Christ found in Psalm 110. This psalm was supposed to be used at the coronation of a new king in Israel or Judah and no prediction of Christ was at all intended.

Refusing to abide by the plain and literal meaning of the text was a problem in Luther's time just as it is today. Barth, Brunner, Bultmann and other utilizers of the Historical-Critical Method have resorted to methods that reject the clear and literal meaning of the Scriptural text. The denial of the accounts giving Biblical miracles would be examples of present-day attitudes and procedures, which both Luther and Walther would condemn. Relative to the abandonment of the literal method Luther said: "We must not commit sacrilege against the word of God and without warrant of any express passage of Scripture give a word a meaning that differs from its natural sense" (Weimar Ed. 11:434).

Principles Of Biblical Interpretation

Luther insisted that the Scriptures be interpreted in their literal sense because they had been given by God:

The Holy Spirit is the plainest Writer and Speaker in heaven and on earth. His words can therefore have no more than one sense, and it is the most obvious sense. This we call the literal or natural sense . . . it is . . . surer and safer to abide by the words in their simple sense (Weimar, 23:92).

For Luther, Genesis 2:7: And the Lord God formed man from the dust on the ground and then breathed into him the principle of life, called spirit or soul. To interpret this verse as saying that a man developed from some primate or apelike creature, is an interpretation that completely deviates from the literal meaning of the passage.

Both Luther and Walther agree that in the interpretation of a Scriptural text, the interpreter is guided by context and intention. Luther insisted: "Neither a conclusion or a figure of speech should be admitted in any place of the Bible, unless evident contextual circumstances or the absurdity of anything obviously militating against an article of faith requires it. On the contrary, we must everywhere adhere to the simple, pure and natural meaning of the words. This accords with the rules of grammar and the usage of speech which God has given men" (Weimar Ed., 18:700). Walther in Thesis XVI, F. stated the matter in this way: "The Evangelical Lutheran Church acknowledges the literal sense may be the improper sense as well as the proper; but it does not depart from the proper sense unless forced by Scripture itself—either the circumstances of the text itself or a parallel passage or the analogy of faith."

Entire Bible God's Word

Both Luther and Walther accepted the entire Bible as Word of God (God's Word). Both of these theologians considered nothing in the Bible superfluous or of little worth but everything needful and important, and they also accepted all teaching deduced of necessity from the word of Scripture. Luther spoke about this matter in St. L. Ed. 20:775. Walther cited the following Scriptures as supporting this stance: Matt. 5:18, 19; Rev. 22:18, 19; Matt. 22:29-32.

Luther and Walther gave each teaching of God's Word the place it has in the Bible itself. The Wittenberg reformer and the former St. Louis Concordia Seminary professor made the teaching of Christ or justification by faith "the foundation and marrow and guiding star of all teaching." Scriptures that set forth this truth are I Cor. 3:11; 2:2; Rev. 19:10. No interpretation of Holy Writ was acceptable which contradicted this foundational truth. The Augsburg Confession, though written by Melancthon, represented the theology of Luther. Articles XXVI, 4 and XXVII 48 of the Augsburg Confession set forth this position clearly and are two confessional passages that Walther referred to in his treatise *The Lutheran Church and True Visible Church*.

Luther and Walther insisted that the Biblical interpreter must sharply distinguish between Law and Gospel. Walther wrote a great classic entitled, *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel*, a volume replete with many quotations from Luther. Both theologians would support this basic approach to interpretation by such passages as John 1:17, Rom. 10:4 and II Tim. 2:15. However, Luther and Walther would disagree with those who claim that as long as one does not violate this principle in Scriptural interpretation, when interpreting a given passage, the interpreter can question other teachings and assertions of the Word of God, as has been claimed and still is being demanded by certain scholars in our Synod.

Walther, following Luther, distinguished between fundamental and non-fundamental doctrines in Scriptures. Walther under Thesis XVIII, C. cites I Cor. 3: 11-15 as Scriptural evidence for this stance. Again, however, such a legitimate distinction does not allow the rejection or non-acceptance of those teachings that are not necessary for salvation. On one occasion Luther wrote: "We should . . . let the Scripture rule and master, and we should not be masters ourselves according to our mad heads, setting ourselves above Scriptures" (Weimar, 47:367).

Both Luther and Walther distinguished just as sharply and cautiously between the Old and New Testament Scriptures. Passages that would support such a principle would be Gal. 4:1-5, 7 and Col. 2:16, 17 (cf. Thesis XVIII, E in Walther).

The founder of Lutheranism and the great theological leader in the early days of our Synod only accepted those teachings as articles of faith which are contained in the Word of God and are, therefore, certain. Luther in his writings expressed himself a number of times on this matter (cf. St. Ed., 8:1003; 18:1678f.). Walther cites the following Scriptures as supporting this principle: Heb. 11:1; Tit. 1:9; II Pet. 1:19 (cf. Thesis XIX).

Analogy of Faith

According to Luther and Walther all formulations of Christian doctrine must agree with analogy of faith. What is meant by analogy of faith? It "is the true norm of Scripture doctrine which no interpretation must offend which set forth a doctrine" (Arndt, *Lutheran Cyclopedia*, p. 463). This means that clear passages must be the norm and not the dark passages. Dark passages are to be interpreted by the clear ones (cf. Walther Thesis XVI, G, H, I.).

Present day problems in our Synod and in other Lutheran church bodies are due to the fact that theologians, professors, pastors, teachers, and lay people have forsaken basic principles of Biblical interpretation as held and practiced by Luther and Walther. Thus there are those who claim that the Bible contains mistakes in both Testaments, that Christ and the Messianic era were not foretold by various Old Testament prophets, that the Old Testament does not need to be interpreted in the light of the New, that the two Testaments do not constitute a unified revelation of the Triune God, that the miracles of the Bible did not occur as described, that not *all* truths of Holy Writ need be accepted and believed, and that the Bible contains myth, legends, saga (ala Gunkel and Bultmann). Those promoting these positions are not in step with Luther or Walther and thus with the historic position of authentic Lutheranism. They also are in opposition to the Synod's stance as may be seen from various doctrinal resolutions adopted between 1956 and 1973.

Dr. Raymond F. Surburg
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Editorial Policy

While the articles in *Affirm* with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

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On The News Front

THE Commission on Theology and Church Relations last fall published its *Report on Dissent from A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles and Other Doctrinal Resolutions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*. One of its key findings reads, "After eliminating those communications which oppose the adoption of 'A Statement' on constitutional grounds and those communications which fail to specify the nature of their theological objections to 'A Statement,' there remain about fifty communications which have been helpful in the preparation of this theological evaluation of 'A Statement.'" Put differently, the people who criticized the subject matter of "A Statement" were relatively few in a church body of 3,000,000; the *Report* carefully responds to the questions they raised. Write LC-MS, 500 N. Broadway, St. Louis, Missouri, 63102, for your copy of the report!

THOSE with liberal tendencies have organized a new non-profit corporation, Lutheran Church in Mission (LCM) in a recent February meeting attended by 90 members from 48 congregations and 22 states and the District of Columbia. The Chicago meeting elected, among others, Dr. C. T. Spitz (formerly of LCUSA) and the Rev. Omar Stuenkel to its board. A representative, according to the press, stated the purpose of the group, "If present trends are reversed during (Anaheim) . . . the new organization will not be activated. If the repressive leadership goes on, we will be forced to sever our relationship." About that "repressive leadership" (which does no more than remain faithful to Missouri's theology) a veteran clergyman is quoted in a conservative newsletter, "I've preached this way my entire ministry and so did my colleagues, at least in the early years, long before Preus was even in the Missouri Synod. There's nothing new in 'A Statement!' Why all the fuss?"

THE factual story of how a Seminex professor organized, after the 1974 walkout, *The World Mission Institute*, appropriating the name in use since 1971 by our St. Louis Sem, obtained \$21,300 from the Lutheran Women's Missionary League (which acted in good faith), and disbursed these funds for Seminex purposes rather than through the channels of the St. Louis Sem as had been customary in the past, has now been reported in sufficient detail to make the sequence of events clear. The professor, confronted with a legal opinion, agreed to drop the corporate name; negotiations are under way to regain some of the money he obtained and to use the rest of it for the usual scholarships granted those attending our own Sem. You can read the account of this unhappy episode in detail by asking for it from Concordia Seminary, 801 De Mun Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri, 63105.

THE Doctrinal Concerns Program has continued to spread according to recent reports by C. A. Swanson. Operating on local, district and state levels, it helps inform Missourians concerning the issues the church faces and organizes them for action. Write Mr. Swanson, 335 Poage Farm Road, Cincinnati, Ohio, 45215, for materials.

WIDESPREAD concern about The President's Theological Convocation, April 14-18 at our St. Louis Sem, continues to be expressed in many ways. *Affirm's* mail reflects this as do some of the conservative publications around the country. Perhaps one of the most balanced responses appeared in *Vision*, and official publication of the South Wisconsin District, in which President Karl L. Barth wrote, "Reaction to the convocation? It has not all been favorable, ranging from cries by the left of 'charade' to cries by the right of 'more political maneuvering.' I am frank to say that I spoke against this proposal, certainly not because of an aversion for theological dialogue. On the contrary, on this page I have repeatedly decried the fact that we have had so little. I question, however, a \$250,000 (estimated) tab for the relatively small number of 'new' people involved. I am disappointed that the convocation will not have the benefit of the materials of the AC-DC at its disposal . . . And I can only hope that its format does not give the impression that our Synod does not have a clear and well-defined position on these matters and that the jury is still out. But there is going to be a convocation. Let us pray, therefore, that it will be fruitful so that the issues, real and serious, may become clear to all and we may be sped on our way, as God gives grace, to their resolution." (Emphasis added.)

A concerned laywoman writes about the slowness of the church in responding to such matters as the Tietjen and other cases. *Affirm's* front page analysis of what Anaheim must act on responds to her questions as to whether conservatives really are persuaded and act on their convictions.

For the sake of the record, the termination of Dr. Teitjen as president of the Sem was based on the following charges:

On The News Front: (Continued from Previous Page)

1. Holding and defending, allowing and fostering false doctrine contrary to Article II of the Constitution of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
2. Rendering himself unable to mediate and settle doctrinal disagreements within the faculty.
3. Administrative irresponsibility.
4. Presumptuous and wrongful assumption of Board of Control duties and prerogatives.
5. Intimidation on occasion of Board of Control members.
6. Not dealing in a Christian manner with faculty members.
7. Demeaning the office of the Synodical President and defying the executive authority thereof.
8. Opposing the Synodical President in his efforts to resolve the doctrinal problems at the Seminary.
9. Insubordination to the authority of the Board for Higher Education.
10. Failing to maintain careful watch over the spiritual welfare, personal life and conduct of the student body.

The Board of Control, moreover, promised an *extensive report to the church*, provided no appeal had been made by Dr. Tietjen in the meantime.

However, while it had the authority to remove him from office at the Sem, his status as a Missouri clergyman depends on the district president under whose jurisdiction he is. The Committee on Constitutional Matters has been asked to rule on this.

The CCM has just ruled that the full report of the Board should not be released till Dr. Tietjen's clergy status has been determined.

TWO related documents will help clarify for the layman (and for pastors who may not have had access to one or the other) the essentials of the mission problem which Missouri has now come to grips with. The first is a speech made by Professor Otto C. Hintze of our Springfield Sem, who speaks from thirty years of experience in our mission work. In this Milwaukee address he makes four major points about the changes those with liberal-leanings made in Missouri's mission policies: the trend toward diminishing mission work overseas, the trend toward an unscriptural theology governing missions (the belief that those without faith in Christ may not be lost), the trend toward accenting a social ministry at the expense of proclaiming the saving Word, and the trend toward an erring unionism. Some of the revealing details of what has happened to our mission thrust, which he discusses, may astonish you. You can have a copy of this address by writing Laymen's Analysis, Hope Lutheran Church, 6416 South Washtenaw Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, 60629; please send along 15¢.

The second of these documents, The Mission of the Christian Church in the World, reviews the 1965 Mission Affirmations and sets them in their proper perspective. Copies of this document can be had by writing to LC-MS, 500 North Broadway, St. Louis, Missouri, 63102.

IN October of 1969 the Council of Presidents signed a letter repudiating Christian News. A recent convass of this Council indicates the following facts: men like Dr. T. Nickel, Presidents Wollenberg, Nieting and Niermann have withdrawn their signatures. Pastor Zimmermann, president of Indiana, in a fine essay pointed up the inconsistency and/or injustice of this action, and President Barth disassociated himself from it and condemned the continuation of this corporate action as beyond the normal and constitutional domain of this body. In essence, the unanimous repudiation no longer exists, and what action, if any, the COP might take concerning it today is debatable. As other unofficial publications in Missouri, Christian News should stand or fall on its own merits.

THE February Lutheran Forum contains an article by Lester F. Hein, which he calls, LC/USA: a Fading Hope? He points out that at the installation of Dr. G. Harkins to succeed Dr. Spitz, President Preus did not participate in the liturgy, but spoke a few words at the end of the service. The author writes, "The fact is that President Jack Preus' refusal to wear vestments and read a lesson in the sanctuary with his two fellow presidents was in one sense a bit of honesty. There is not sufficient unity among the three member churches of LC/USA to justify showing any high degree of solidarity . . ." Though he unfairly calls Missouri's conservatives the "radical right" and speaks of one church president's "political maneuvering," he frankly does admit also, "Currently the Lutheran Council News Bureau is under siege. Mostly the complaints and threats to slash its budget came from St. Louis. But it cannot be said that the churches based in

On The News Front: *(Continued from Previous Page)*

Minneapolis and New York (the ALC and LCA-editor) are displaying a passion for letting the truth be told."

The slashes Heins foresaw have become a reality; Missouri's circumstances have prompted it to drop its participation in LC/USA from \$700,000 to \$493,000 in 1975.

IT is difficult at this moment to sort out all the issues involved in the closing of the Divinity School of St. Louis University. That Catholic event would not be of great significance for Missourians except that the School provides the physical setting for Seminex. While the first press reports contained statements of Seminex's confidence that its contract with the University would be renewed, no one, understandably, at this time can predict the future. Nor is the fact that degrees were awarded to Seminex grads by a Lutheran Seminary in Illinois as yet a settled legal matter; it is under appeal and the final disposition of the case remains open.

THE financial difficulties of Missouri in 1975 can likely be traced to several factors, including the general economic picture. But a district by district analysis has led President Preus to conclude, "A look at 1974 District contributions and pledges for 1975 shows that those Districts where the support of Seminex is strongest let the Synod down." Had all districts met their 1974 pledges, Missouri could have ended its year with a surplus! It is significant that according to the best outside estimates the ELIM operation calls for a million dollar budget, and that the 1975 pledge change in Missouri shows a drop of \$1,215,000.

FEW actions have caused such a stir as the Sem's Board of Control decision to bar Seminex personnel from its library. That action has since been amended to permit a limited use of these library facilities to any Seminex individuals who "do not agree with the Seminex position of opposition and judgment toward Concordia Seminary." These individuals will be treated as exceptions to the policy the Board adopted upon their statement to that effect. However, the general policy adopted by the Board will remain in effect, and the school's Acting President, Ralph Bohlman, explained the Board's action:

"Our library policy was not taken hastily. Our records indicate that 72 percent of library circulation services in the spring quarter of the 1973-1974 academic year and 51 percent of similar services in this quarter were provided to Seminex personnel—even though Seminex at no point requested us to provide such services or offered to pay us for them. For many months, we have entertained the hope that Seminex students would return to one of the two synodical seminaries as the result of various reconciliation efforts in progress. Failing that, we had hoped that the Seminex attitude of judgment toward us and the Synod might be replaced by a more charitable and positive one. We reasoned that our many fraternal efforts to dissuade Seminex from using our name illegally would be successful. It now appears that these were vain hopes. Seminex intends to continue its existence, evidently without any change of name or purpose. For us to continue to provide essential educational services to Seminex would be in fact to encourage an institution that is working at cross purposes with those of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and Concordia Seminary."

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"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13

'Speaking The Truth in Love'

ARTICLES and editorials appearing in the literature published in support of the position of Seminex and of ELIM have been contending that Christian doctrine and Biblical teachings are not to be held in an absolute manner. Since there are divergences on the same doctrines, it is now being advocated that insistence on correct interpretation is not in the best interest of Christ's kingdom, that unity, despite the fact that differences on important teachings exist, is to be maintained at all costs. No church body, it is claimed, has "a corner on the truth." Love for fellow Christians will necessitate yielding to another person's theological position, even though a scriptural teaching has only one intended meaning. To condemn erroneous and false teachings and doctrines is said to be a loveless and an unChristian act, promoting dissension in the kingdom of God. Those who insist that the teachings of the Word of God are clear and advocate that their contrary position be eschewed are labelled troublemakers and despoilers of Christ's vineyard.

An editorial in *Missouri in Perspective*, appearing shortly before Christmas, 1974, the feast of God's love, asserted that the Pauline injunction: "Let us therefore follow after the things that make for peace" (Romans 14:19) required the non-insistence on one doctrinal position. Those who were insisting that Biblical teaching be adhered to (as resolutions adopted at New Orleans did) were described as acting as "the strong" who are forcing their will and their convictions on "the weak," a practice Paul forbids in Romans 14. The editorial expressed the view that peace and unity are to be found in "risking all for Jesus: by walking by love." "Peace and unity can only be found in Him who came and who comes."

The Old and New Testament Scriptures deal with the relationship of love, peace and truth to each other. In the following presentation the relationship of love and truth to each other will be discussed from the perspective of the New Testament.

The Teaching of Jesus on Truth

When Jesus was about to leave this earth, He commanded His apostles to make disciples of all nations by baptizing people and also "by teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20). On the Monday of Holy Week Jesus said: "He who rejects me and does not receive my sayings has a judge; the word that I have spoken will be his judge on the last day" (John 12:48 RSV). That Jesus expects His followers to accept and follow His teachings, is made clarion-clear by what Jesus said to those Jews who believed on him: "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (John 8:31-32 RSV). While it is true that a Christian is a person who accepts Christ as his personal Savior, and this involves a personal relationship between Christ and the believer, it is also a

fact that Jesus expects His followers to read and accept the teachings of the Old Testament especially those that predicted various facts about Him. On Maundy Thursday Jesus promised His disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit (the Paraclete) who would bring all things back to their memories and who would also guide them into all truth. In His High priestly Prayer (John 17) Jesus prayed to His heavenly Father for those who would believe in Him because of the disciples' word, the Word of God which the Holy Spirit would cause the disciples to speak and also to write down, and concerning this word Jesus prayed: "Consecrate them in the truth; thy word is truth" (John 17-19 RSV).

The Teaching of Paul on Truth

The importance of declaring the entire counsel of God is emphasized by Paul in his farewell address to the Ephesian elders or pastors, when Paul said: "For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27 RSV). The apostle further predicted: "I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things," to draw the disciples after them (Acts 20:29-31 RSV).

The first perversion of the truth faced by first-century apostolic Christianity was occasioned by the Judaizing controversy as reported in Acts 15, a situation also reflected in the Galatian Epistle. The Judaizers were Jewish Christians who added something to Christ's plan of salvation by insisting that all Christians, be they Jews or Gentiles, be circumcized and adhere to the ceremonial law. By doing this they were adding a plus to God's New Testament plan of salvation and thus detracting from the completeness of Christ's vicarious effort. On one occasion the Apostle Peter sided with the Judaizers by refusing to eat with Gentile Christians, because he was afraid of the criticism of the Judaizing party. When Paul saw this happening, he rebuked Peter before the entire group at Antioch, before Judaizers and non-Judaizers, and said to Peter, as reported in Galatians 2:11-17, "If you, though a Jew live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles live like Jews (v. 14 RSV)." A great theological truth was at stake and Paul did not hesitate to rebuke Peter for his faulty practice, which supported the false stance of the Judaizers. Today there would be those who would say that Paul was creating dissension by insisting on his understanding of justification, apart from works. Paul did not subscribe to the view that peace must be adhered to no matter what the cost. There are times when error must be rebuked, no matter what the consequences! Truth and error cannot co-exist.

(Continued on Page 7)

Tenure

TENURE is a very controversial subject in educational circles today. It has long been an idol of educators because of the job security it provides. Since the adoption of the 1940 "Statement" of the American Association of University Professors it has been a sacred cow. To attack tenure has put one in the category of those who attack motherhood and the flag.

Yet today younger faculty members complain that tenure actually discriminates against them. The very fact that tenure must be granted after seven years of creditable service leads colleges and universities to terminate the contract of younger men prior to that time in order to prevent a situation in which most if not all faculty members will be tenured, a situation which many regard as undesirable because it prevents the introduction of new blood into a college, university, or graduate school faculty.

Increasing numbers of educational institutions have abandoned tenure entirely. They offer three or four year contracts which are renewable indefinitely. The argument is that the teaching effectiveness of faculty members must be reviewed regularly and that those who measure up to standards under that system will routinely have their contracts renewed.

THIS procedure has been vigorously fought by the academic community. There is fear that this will not provide the guarantee of academic freedom that tenure policies are supposed to provide nor will it provide the job security that faculty members are seeking.

Some institutions place a strict limitation on the number of tenured positions that are available; usually only departmental heads are tenured. Other faculty members are told in advance that their contracts will not be renewed beyond three or six years. This policy is rigidly adhered to even though in the process the institutions lose valuable faculty members.

Still other institutions place a mathematical limitation on the number of tenured positions that are available. Once this number has been reached no more tenured positions are available and faculty contracts which expire are not renewed even though the individuals are qualified for continuing service.

The chief arguments in favor of tenure are academic freedom and the provision of economic security. It is argued that faculty members will be free to present controversial ideas only if they are protected against recrimination. It is also argued that faculty members are entitled to the same economic security that government employees are entitled to. Another argument is that tenure contributes to institutional stability. There is little turnover if a large number of faculty members are tenured. It is generally agreed that a faculty member is a better teacher after he has taught for several years. Students are spared the learning process that every new faculty member has to go through. It is also argued that the provision of tenure helps institutions avoid continuing on their faculties those who are agreeable but not outstanding. They must reach a decision as to whether or not to grant permanent tenure and are likely to eliminate faculty members who do not meet the institution's educational standards.

THE chief arguments against tenure are that tenure protects mediocrity and that it perpetuates established departments and programs. It is argued that once a faculty member has achieved tenure there is little incentive to improve or even maintain teaching standards. A tenured faculty member, it is argued, can

devote all of his attention to non-classroom activities to the neglect of his real responsibilities because he has security. It is also argued that educational institutions tend to maintain programs in order to employ tenured faculty members. Some argue that tenure concentrates power in the hands of tenured faculty to the disadvantage of students and non-tenured faculty and that it commits the institution to the individual but not the individual to the institution.

In spite of the criticisms that have been raised against tenure, I believe that it ought to be retained in the synodical system. No one would argue that tenure is needed in order to protect academic freedom; in joining the Synod and joining a synodical faculty an individual has surrendered his freedom to teach contrary to God's Word. Nor is the argument that tenure provides economic security significant in the synodical system. However, institution stability is extremely important, and tenure does assist in providing this. Because of the smallness and intimacy of the synodical schools the makeup of the faculty is extremely important. In the past many of our schools have come to be closely associated with faculty members who served them. The institutional traditions have been largely faculty traditions.

MOREOVER, it is true that conscientious teachers improve after they have served for several years in the classroom. Substantial turnover on synodical faculties might well be disastrous.

There is another matter to be considered, and that is the attractiveness of a position on a synodical faculty. The pastor of a congregation or its teacher in most cases has tenure. He may serve until he accepts another call or until he retires. The successful parish pastor might be reluctant to join a synodical faculty unless there were some reasonable hope of permanent tenure once he had demonstrated his teaching competence. And it is just this *successful* parish pastor or teacher that ought to be teaching on a synodical faculty. In my judgment it is extremely important that the men and women who teach future pastors and teachers be men and women who have been successful in that role themselves. Recruiting faculties might be a very difficult thing if tenure were abolished. An individual who has been successful in the parish would be hesitant to try something in which he has no guarantee of success unless there is reasonable hope of tenure.

There are indeed many arguments against tenure but there are also significant reasons why tenure should be retained at our synodical schools, and I believe the latter outweigh the former.

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Contributions

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The Results of Denver

ALMOST six years have gone by since that day when the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, assembled in convention, voted to change its leadership and with that its theological direction. To some this appeared to be a catastrophe, but to many others it was a miracle. For the first time in modern history, a major church body was taking steps to arrest the growth of liberalism before the new theology had become a dominant force. In all other cases, the awakening had come too late and the conservative element found itself in a minority position. A question remained, however. Could even the Missouri Synod, with its strong confessional base and trained laity—its vast unparalleled educational system, stem the tide?

To many pastors and laymen, the answer they would give today, six years later, would be no. These are the people who find themselves in parishes which are seemingly surrounded by those of a liberal persuasion. Some parishoners find that their pastors are openly espousing support of ELIM, a church within a church. Many conservative pastors are discovering that they are quite alone in their circuits and are ostracized as a result of this. Districts which once thought of themselves as conservative, now have a leadership advocating a position which is quite different.

It is easy to understand why the individuals caught in these situations would have a tendency to become discouraged. From their point of view, things have only gotten worse. It is for that reason that it is well occasionally to review past events from a synodical perspective. Has anything of significance taken place at this level during the past six years which would indicate that our Synod has, indeed, accomplished what it set out to do?

The answer must be a resounding "yes"!

FIRST and foremost in the list of accomplishments is the recognition that we do have a problem in theology, and that it is one of major proportions. Prior to Denver, assurances were given again and again that there were no differences in teaching. Complaint after complaint was brushed aside or made to appear invalid or trivial.

Today we know the truth about these matters. The fact finding committee, after months of patient and thorough investigations, issued a report which clearly indicated that some members of the St. Louis faculty were, indeed, teaching false doctrine. This was verified later by the faculty majority itself when it issued the document *Faithful to Our Calling, Faithful to Our Lord*. Based upon this, the Synod at its New Orleans convention took action which condemned the position of the faculty majority.

The result of all this? Well, today Concordia Seminary has a new faculty; one committed to teaching in accordance with Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. Young men are now graduating from that institution with an entirely different outlook. They are again being taught to respect God's Word as truth, and to preach the Gospel with power and conviction. What a blessing God has given us—undeserving as we are!

TODAY we recognize that we do have deep differences in doctrine, and it is becoming more and more apparent to those on both sides that these are irreconcilable. The various committees have done nothing more than spell out the differences—the convocation will, undoubtedly, add more evidence which will bear out the magnitude of that difference. Can you imagine where we would be now had Denver not taken place?

Composition of boards and commissions is another positive change which has taken place. Prior to 1969 the various official agencies had slowly been populated with individuals of a liberal persuasion. There were preferred lists of candidates long before

New Orleans, and they were kept secret and were used primarily by one side. The other side was still trusting and unsuspecting. Following Denver, the voice of an aroused laity began to make itself heard. Using the democratic election process, they and their pastors began to elect board and commission members who had expressed a positive approach to Scripture and our synodical position. As a result, we have official agencies taking action and issuing reports which are supportive of the majority voice of our membership. The outcome of all this is a long-range effect which will make itself felt in all phases of synodical life. Again, can you imagine where we would be now if Denver had not occurred?

BUT perhaps the greatest accomplishment is a special one, also brought about by the grace of God, and one we may not even be aware of. Our church members were in great danger of becoming a "we've been confirmed, we know it all" group. The Bible became something we cherished—as an object on our bookshelf. And then our complacency was shattered by the post-Denver events. For many it meant a renewed searching of the Scriptures and the Confessions as they found their long cherished beliefs being challenged. Study after study was instituted as we grappled with the theological problems that confronted us. Out of all of this has come a deeper and more thorough understanding of the fundamental doctrine contained in Holy Scripture—and what it means to be a Lutheran under the Confessions.

As pastors and laymen increased in knowledge, they also acquired a conviction. This has been expressed in the two subsequent conventions, each of which has seen the conservative majority increase in size. Milwaukee passed a resolution defining the status of synodically adopted statements. New Orleans re-elected its president on the first ballot, giving him a mandate to continue on the course upon which he had embarked. It also passed doctrinal resolutions clarifying points of contention—stating again and again, "Here We Stand."

And now we face Anaheim, with every indication that the groundswell of grassroots conservatism which first made itself felt in Denver, has continued to grow. Signs point to a further clarification of the issues with the result that a stronger and firmer position will be taken.

If you are discouraged because of a local situation in which you feel all alone because of your conservative position, look around you and take heart! Denver was truly a miracle, for as a result of that convention, a major church body has reversed its theological direction. What an opportunity to thank and praise God for His love and mercy. Remember the words of Gamaliel in Acts 5: "Leave them alone, because if this plan and work of theirs is a man-made thing, it will disappear; but if it comes from God, you cannot possibly defeat them."

Denver and its results have not disappeared.

Editorial Policy

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Legalism?

THE word "legalism" has a nasty sound to it. "Evangelical," on the other hand, sounds sweet and nice.

We hear both words frequently. Especially "legalism" is presently bandied about rather freely by the moderates in our Synod. They shout "legalism!" whenever they are taken to task regarding their permissive doctrinal positions which are clearly in violation of Synod's stand. The same cry arises when any reference is made to what we in the Missouri Synod have agreed upon in Christian love as our way of doing things and have spelled out in the synodical constitution and its by-laws.

Let's review the uses of the word "legalism" and then ask a few questions.

The word has sundry meanings. For example, it is used in the good and laudable sense of living according to laws. Any nation, city, family, factory, school, or office must have established procedures and rules of behavior. The alternative is chaos and anarchy.

The word "legalism" also serves as a theological term for the false doctrine which teaches salvation by works rather than by grace.

A third use of the word describes an undue emphasis on outward form to the neglect of the inner spirit or intent. Thus, a strict and legalistic observance of the sign, "Please keep this door shut at all times" would make it literally impossible for any one to get in or out of the room.

NOW for a few questions which we are paraphrasing from a list which has appeared here and there in conservative regional publications.

1. Is it legalism for a group of Christians to organize a synod and adopt a constitution and by-laws?
2. When people who have signed that constitution and by-laws are expected to abide by their signatures, is that legalism?
3. Is it legalism for people to expect the signers to do so?
4. Is it evangelical for students at a Christian institution to boycott classes and insist that they will not return until their demands have been met?
5. Is it evangelical for professors to go on strike?
6. When paychecks are withheld from those who do not fulfill their contracts, is that legalism?
7. Therefore, are boycotts and strikes Law or Gospel?
8. Is it legalism for Christians to rise in defense of the Bible exactly as it speaks to us?
9. Is it evangelical to insist that there are mistakes in the Bible?
10. When Lutheran officials and boards are expected to be faithful to their installation vows, is that legalism?
11. Is it evangelical to accuse faithful officials of legalism?
12. If the Missouri Synod is legalistic, is ELIM in its revolt against the Missouri Synod to be considered evangelical?

These questions are a good check list when one hears the words legalistic and evangelical. They are worth pondering.

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Quincy, Illinois

Both . . . And

A district official once stated that many pastors and laymen who call themselves "conservatives" are so "hung up" on keeping the doctrinal position of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod pristine pure that they spend very little time in doing the work of evangelism, sharing the good news that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

God forbid that this charge can be truthfully made against any pastor or layperson in our Synod!

We nevertheless need to constantly remind ourselves that a proper balance must be affirmed and maintained between doctrinal purity and evangelism. It is not doctrinal purity at the expense or neglect of evangelism; nor dare it be the work of evangelism at the expense or neglect of uncompromising loyalty to God's Word. God-pleasing alternatives are not EITHER-OR, but BOTH-AND.

A Biblical parallel for our situation in the church today is the exciting account of the reconstruction of the walls of Jerusalem some 450 years before the birth of Christ. The walls of the Holy City were broken down and its gates burned with fire. The deteriorating condition of the walls provided very little protection and security. God's prophet Nehemiah and God's people therefore banded themselves together to accomplish one common task: "Let us rise up and build." (Nehemiah 2, 18)

Satan, however, did not allow this God-pleasing project to be completed without doing everything he could to discourage, disrupt and destroy it. Sanballat and Tobiah, the leaders of the opposition, at first scornfully laughed at and despised the plans to

rebuild. As the walls continued to be rebuilt their derisive scorn and laughter turned to anger and then to calculated scheming to overthrow the city of Jerusalem.

Wise Nehemiah's plan was excellent:

Half of my servants worked in the work and the other half of them held the spears, the shields and the bows and the coats of mail . . . the ones who built on the wall and the ones who carried burdens, with those who were lifting, each one worked with one of his hands in the work and held a weapon. (Nehemiah 4, 16-17)

FOR Nehemiah it wasn't all wall building and no defending. That would have been disastrous! Equally catastrophic would have been all defending and no wall building! It would have been most difficult to do the Lord's work if Nehemiah gave his people an EITHER-OR option. It had to be BOTH-AND.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod needs to build the Lord's Kingdom AND defend the Word of God from all who attack that Word from both within and outside the church. Not EITHER-OR, but BOTH-AND!

May the Lord of the Church give us a rich measure of His Spirit that we may both defend the entire Word of God as revealed in the Holy Scriptures and share its message with a world desperately in need of that message.

The Rev. Andrew Simcak, Jr. Pastor
St. Timothy Lutheran Church
Houston, Texas

On the News Front

CONTRARY to the repeated statement that the case of the Seminary's Board of Control against Tietjen was weak, doesn't bear public scrutiny, and therefore has not been placed before Missouri now that it has been closed, the Board did authorize the Acting President of the Sem to prepare a complete report on this case and to publish it no later than March 31 so that the Tietjen matter might be fully laid before the church with all promptness. The Commission on Constitutional Matters has ruled otherwise. The key finding in its *Opinion re Further Procedures* is the following sentence, "6. Since the Board of Control is obligated under Bylaw 6.79.1 to forward the accusation to the District President, no publicity should be given the case beyond the simple announcement by the Board of Control of the action taken and its basis." *Affirm* suggests that a different ruling might have served the church better. Whatever the case against Tietjen, the facts should be made known to all members of Synod as soon as possible. The Board of Control has removed him from the presidency of the Sem; that matter is now closed. It should be reported on. How his District President disposes of his continuance as a clergyman in Missouri is altogether another question.

ACCORDING to reports, somewhere around the middle of March, no Seminex student had accepted the Board of Control's offer to permit any of its student body to use the Sem's library if he signed a statement that he didn't share the Seminex opposition to Missouri. In a meeting of the Board of Control with the representatives of both the Sem's student body and the Seminex student body, a Seminex student declared that he agreed with the Tietjen judgment that the Sem was one of the dead and corrupt institutions of Missouri. It is hard to believe that this attitude reflects that of most of the Seminex students.

ONE of the strangest contradictions in the Tietjen case is the positions he takes with respect to Missouri and its St. Louis Seminary. On the one hand, as the new Seminex president, he wants his Seminex graduates placed in Missouri's congregations. On the other hand he has made statements like these, "The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod we have known is dead. Let the dead bury their dead. The organization that has given us life and nurtured us is no more. Its structures are hopelessly corrupt. Its leadership is morally bankrupt." Moreover, in rejecting the invitation to attend the faculty hearing of this case late last summer he wrote, "There is no way for you to escape the judgment of God that has already descended on you and that will continue to afflict you for your disdain of our Lord's injunction in Matthew 18 and for your perpetration of injustice through your violation of God's commandments." Earlier in 1974 he wrote, "I pray that God in His mercy will spare the majority members of the Board of Control the terrible judgment they deserve for their refusal to do justice and to love mercy." *Affirm* cannot understand why Dr. Tietjen, if Missouri is dead and hopelessly corrupt and if all the other judgments he makes on it are true, would want his Seminex grads to become a part of such a decadent church group.

A committee of the Sem's Board of Control recently proposed—and the Board of Control passed—the following resolution, based on a series of reasons presented in the "WHEREAS" portion of the resolution, "RESOLVED, That the Synod reaffirm the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws pertaining to the placement of ministers; and be it further RESOLVED, That the Synod remind the council of presidents of its responsibilities relative to the placement of ministers and further remind them that they are not to interfere with duties and responsibilities assigned to others; and be it finally RESOLVED, That the Synod censure and reprimand ALL such District Presidents as have ordained, participated in the ordination of or tolerated the ordination of 'Seminex' graduates and request that they in all love fulfill their duties or resign."

THE Rev. Richard Neuhaus of Brooklyn, an LC-MS advocate of liberal positions, together with a Lutheran sociologist at Rutgers a year ago initiated a movement which resulted in a document now popularly known as the *Hartford Heresies*. A whole issue of *Affirm* could be devoted to an analysis of this 1,150 word statement. *Time* summarizes the document that the 18 men who met at Hartford Seminary finally issued as "a dramatic warning that American theology has strayed dangerously far afield."

The 10th of the specific theses which these churchmen found "false and debilitating" reads, "The world must set the agenda for the Church. Social, political and economic programs to improve the quality of life are ultimately normative for the Church's mission in the world." *Affirm*

On The News Front: (Continued from Page 5)

agrees that such a statement is heretical; God sets the agenda for the church—and the first item on His agenda has always been proclaiming the Gospel while also caring for man's physical need.

All this might seem academic to Missourians except for the fact that the 1969 June, July-August issue of the *Concordia Theological Monthly*, the journal of the LC-MS edited by the St. Louis Sem's faculty, contained an article by Dr. Tietjen. In it he wrote, "In fact, do we begin the theological task with some basic thematic expression of the gospel? No! Not if we want to assure a relevant proclamation of the gospel! For theology to be relevant, the theological task has to begin not with the gospel but with the situation to which it is addressed. The first step in theology formulation is to analyze the conditions of the world for whose sake the gospel is to be proclaimed. 'The world writes the agenda', we are being told these days. True as that may be in other areas, it is also true for theology. The situation in our world should help shape our theology." *Affirm* notes two facts: one, that Neuhaus, a liberal, now apparently differs from Tietjen's theology (the difficulties with the more liberal position in Missouri are the great variation between those who are mildly liberal and those who are more radical as well as the shifting positions liberals hold) and secondly, that recent correspondence to *Affirm* from one of the districts notes that two of its members, 1973 graduates of St. Louis, recently acknowledged that at the Sem they were taught positions the *Hartford Heresies* condemn.

RECENTLY more than 55 men and women signed a document they called, *In Response to the Dismissal of President John Tietjen*. The Sem's Board of Control in its February meeting authorized a reply to this common statement. Quotations from this reply will indicate the concerns of those who signed the document as well as the Sem's stand over against them, "You charge that the Board of Control's decision 'has not been based on the Word of God' and that the Board has used its office 'to bind, hinder, and suppress the Word of God on the basis of human opinion.' Nothing could be farther from the truth . . . Throughout the 14 painstaking months in which the Board of Control dealt with the charges against Dr. Tietjen, the commitment to that standard (the Word of God—Editor) was ever before the Board." The reply narrates how that concern was evident in submitting the matter to the CTCR, the faculty hearings committee, and in the Board's own dealing with the matter. "The authority of the Board's judgment is derived from the Word of God. Its binding character is the binding character of that Word, and of that alone." It further says, "As of this writing, constitutional and legal strictures may still limit the release of full documentation. Therefore, at the date of your letter you were, and you still are, not qualified to render a judgment. Your statement is based on fragmentary information. It is in error. It is irresponsible and should be withdrawn." The Board continues: "It is especially unfortunate that such an ill-advised statement, with its lack of information, intemperate language, and erroneous conclusions should involve faculty members of the Valparaiso University department of religion as well as faculty members of synodical institutions. We recognize that Valparaiso University is a private venture and therefore, strictly speaking, is not a synodical school. Yet it has always held a unique position within Synod and has drawn both students and financial support from within the church . . . We therefore regret more than we can say were your protest statement to stand with resultant damage to your institution."

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Affirm

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The Truth in Love . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

In discussing this serious matter in his Galatian Letter, Paul rejected all compromise or permissiveness. For Paul it was not possible to believe two contradictory positions on the same doctrine. Paul did not allow for divergent positions on the same doctrine. Paul did not believe it was unloving, or that he was guilty of not pursuing peace, when he wrote in white anger: "I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and turning to a different gospel—not that there is another gospel, of Christ, but even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if any one is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:6-9 RSV). Today the Elimites in Missouri would consider such a statement as divisive and as causing polarization.

In writing to the congregations of Asia Minor in his circular Epistle of Ephesians Paul expressed the hope that individual members "be no longer children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles, rather, speaking the truth in love, are to grow up in every way into him who is the head in Christ" (Ephesians 4:14-15 RSV). *Paul places truth before love.* The defense of the truth should be done in a loving manner. The denial and rejection of the truth is a serious matter and is not act of love to permit error to go unchallenged. Error and false teaching can result in eternal doom. Polemics and apologetics are to be conducted not in rancor or hatred or vindictiveness but from real concern for the truth and with the conviction that only the real truth can inform and eventually save. Paul urged the Thessalonian Christians to "stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by letter" (II Thessalonians 2:15 RSV).

In the closing chapter of his Epistle to the Roman congregation Paul warns against false teachers: "I appeal to you, brethren, to take note of those who create dissensions and difficulties, in opposition to the doctrine which you have been taught; avoid them. For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by fair and flattering words they deceive the hearts of the simple-minded" (Romans 16:17-18 RSV).

In the Pastoral Epistles, written to two of his coworkers, Paul stresses the necessity of promoting sound and healthy doctrine and teaching. Repeatedly Paul warns Timothy and Titus against those who are perverting and departing from the truth. His open instruction to Timothy was that he was "to charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine," (I Timothy 1:3 RSV) and he concludes the Epistle by writing: "O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid the godless chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge, for by professing it some have missed the mark as regards the faith" (6:20-21 RSV).

In his last written letter, also addressed to Timothy, Paul encouraged the former: "Follow the pattern of the sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus; guard the truth that has been entrusted to you, by the Holy Spirit who dwells within us" (Italics supplied, II Timothy 1:13-14 RSV).

Not merely Law and Gospel are to be taught and correctly presented but *all* revealed doctrines and instructions. Among the last instructions given by Paul to Timothy were: "The teachings which you have heard from me, attested by many witnesses, deliver into the keeping of faithful men, who in their turn will be able to teach others also" (II Timothy 2:2, *The Centenary Translation*).

Among the very last recorded words of Paul is the charge to Timothy: "Preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths" (II Timothy 4:2-3 RSV).

Titus, a coworker of Paul's active on Crete, is informed that a presbyter must "hold firm to the sure word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound and *also to confute those who contradict it*" (Italics supplied, 1:9 RSV). Of his teaching given Titus Paul asserted: "But as for you, teach what befits sound doctrine." (2:1 RSV) Again: "This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith" (1:13 RSV).

The Teaching on Truth in the General Epistles

The Apostle Peter warns against false teachers in his second epistle to the congregations of Asia Minor. "This is now the second letter that I have written to you, beloved, and in both of them I have aroused your sincere mind by way of reminder . . . first of all you must understand this, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own passions and saying, "Where is the promise of his coming?" (II Peter 3:1, 2-4).

Jude, the brother of James, wrote his brief epistle to warn against false teachers and their false teachings. "Beloved, being very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints" (v. 3 RSV). He started out to write about one matter was forced to write about false teachers who crept in unawares, "ungodly persons who pervert the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 4 RSV).

The Apostle John in his letter to the Elect Lady and the other to Gaius compliments them that they are remaining in the truth. In John's epistles *truth comes before love*. In II John holding and keeping the truth is stressed. To the elect lady John wrote that he loved her and her children in the truth, "and not only I but also all who know the truth, because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever" (v. 1 RSV). After the usual greeting John informs the elect lady: "I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children following the truth, just as we have been commanded by the Father" (v. 4 RSV). In his personal letter to Gaius, John states that he loves him in the truth. After the salutation John immediately praises Gaius, "for I greatly rejoiced when some of the brethren arrived and testified to the truth of your life, as indeed you do follow the truth. No greater joy can I have than this, to hear that my children follow the truth" (v. 3-4 RSV).

In the Book of Revelation John admonished the church in Pergamum for failure to banish from its fellowship those who were supporting the false teachings of the Nicolaitans (Revelation 2:14-16). That all teachings given in the Bible are important, whether classified as fundamental or non-fundamental, may be seen from the very last warning of Revelation: "I warn every one who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if any one adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if any one takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book" (Revelation 22:18-19, RSV).

Peace is not to be attained by the rejection or reinterpretation of Biblical teachings. True love according to the Scriptures consists in being faithful to God's Word, teaching it faithfully and living a God-pleasing life according to it.

Dr. Raymond F. Surburg,
Concordia Theological Seminary
Springfield, Illinois

On The News Front: (Continued from Page 6)

THE Sem's Board also memorialized Synod in another resolution, "RESOLVED, that the Synod in convention assembled reaffirm those Handbook sections which deal with ministerial training and placement, particularly those which provide that congregations may call, ordain, or employ either temporarily or permanently only those who have been approved by the faculty of the two Synodical seminaries or by the colloquy committee; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the District Presidents be asked to deal pastorally with those members of Synod who have violated these sections of the Handbook; and BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, That those congregations which violate Section 4.01a of the Synodical Handbook be dealt with and those who persist in such violation be dealt with in keeping with Section 4.01b of the Synodical Handbook."

ANOTHER memorial of the Sem's Board of Control speaks to the Seminex situation and is worth quoting at length for its many implications at Anaheim,

RESOLVED, That the conduct of those supporting and participating in the existence of "Seminex" is conduct which is offensive to the body of Christ and an open, direct and continuing violation of the entire spirit of a Synod "walking together", and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Synod call upon "Seminex" to forthwith cease and desist from any use whatsoever of the name "Concordia" or any form thereof; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Synod encourage and direct the Boards of Control of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis and Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, to take immediate legal action against "Seminex" if its use of the name "Concordia" as set forth above is not forthwith terminated; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Synod declare its unqualified support of the existing Synodical educational and training system and call upon all those who would retain membership in the Synod to immediately cease and desist from giving support to the institution now known as "Seminex"; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Synod in convention assembled once more call upon those members of the Synod who are teaching or supplying administrative and supportive services to "Seminex" to repent and to cease their offensive conduct; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the District presidents of those members of the Synod who are teaching or supply administrative and supporting services to "Seminex" be asked to admonish these individuals and urge them to repent; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That those members of the Synod who persist in such offensive conduct be expelled from the Synod according to the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod.

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"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"

2 Cor. 4:13

My Impression of the Convocation

I have never received so much reaction to anything I have written as to the paper delivered at the recent Convocation in St. Louis. The reaction, except for one severe blast, was all positive and expressed gratitude simply because I had spoken to the issues in our Synod relative to the authority and inerrancy of Scripture. Apparently, people all over the country were concerned that we face these issues in St. Louis and not talk around them or try to avoid them.

Well, if that is what people in the Missouri Synod wanted, we didn't get much of it at the Convocation in St. Louis. The first day, when I was privileged to speak, we all discussed inspiration and inerrancy, was the best. From then on, the approach of the Moderates became quite clear: Be agreeable and amiable, agree with everything the Conservatives say.

The Moderate reactor on that first day made an attempt to be forthright. He began by asserting that inerrancy was a real issue in our Synod. He frankly rejected the inerrancy of Scripture as understood historically in our Synod. It was a rationalization which went beyond Scripture, he stated. True, he consistently caricatured our historic position. To him the Missouri doctrine of inerrancy indicated "flawlessness or factual precision on all parts of Scripture," hardly a fair or adequate description of our historic position. That unrecognizable, novel and opaque definition was repeated consistently and then rejected. But under questioning, the Moderate reactor did frankly admit that he could not agree with the understanding of inerrancy expressed in the *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod*, which says, "Since the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God, it goes without saying that they contain no errors or contradictions, but that they are in all their parts and words the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters." So we got at the issues that day.

FROM that time on, after Seminex professors took the floor as reactors and essayists, such frankness ceased.

Many of us who are called Conservatives had real hopes for the Convocation, hopes that the doctrinal issues dividing our Synod might be isolated, faced and, under God, settled, at least in part, by the Convocation and what might come out of it. After all, the Advisory Commission on Doctrine and Conciliation (ACDC) had already delineated the issues. And long before that, the New Orleans Convention had done the same and even condemned certain false doctrinal positions which have been taught by the erstwhile faculty majority at the seminary in St. Louis. The synodical President's report of his investigation of the faculty at St. Louis (the *Blue Book*) gave massive evidence that the Synod had every opportunity to understand the issues in New Orleans and had acted responsibly and correctly. And the former faculty majority itself had confirmed and corroborated this evidence by issuing its own statement of faith entitled "*Faithful to Our Calling, Faithful to Our Lord.*"

YES, we had hopes for the Convocation, but such hopes were pretty well shattered after the first day of the Convocation. It was as if many of the delegates there had never read the *Blue Book* or *Faithful to Our Calling*, never heard of the action of the New Orleans Convention (3-09) or the many positions and judgmental actions taken by the Seminex faculty against the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, its administrators, boards and theology. The so-called Moderates just didn't talk at the Convocation, at least not in plenary assembly. And so the impression was given to many that there were no real doctrinal issues, or that there were only pseudo-issues.

The week culminated in frustration for many of us. We enjoyed ourselves, we made new friends, we learned to know and understand each other better. But we never really got to the doctrinal issues, except a little bit on that first day. And that, I believe, was what our Seminex friends wanted.

ONE of the laymen in our buzz session put it this way: "The Moderates just didn't come clean." I think that was a fair observation. Not one participant from Seminex other than scheduled speakers spoke at the plenary sessions and defended his doctrinal position or even sought to clarify it. The only Seminex representatives who spoke were those who were forced to do so because they were on the program. And they smilingly avoided answering questions which might make anyone think they were anything but Orthodox in the tradition of St. Athanasius, Francis Pieper, or C. F. Walther.

It reminded me of a novel by Franz Kafka entitled *The Trial*, a fantasy, the entire plot of which tells of a surveyor who entered a small town in order to survey a castle in the nearby vicinity but never, never found the castle. Shall this be the story of Missouri, endless discussion, probing, group therapy, buzz sessions, but never really getting to the doctrinal issues and settling them?

At the Convocation, we all said we believed the Bible is God's Word, but we didn't mean the same thing when we said that. We all claimed to bow to the Scriptures and their normative authority, but it was obvious that we did not mean the same thing by our protestations. We were all willing even to use the word "inerrancy," but only with definitions of the term which were miles apart, or without reaching any definition at all. Herein was the frustration that so many of us felt.

BUT, if no new revelation took place at the Convocation and no real settlement of the issues or even clarification of some of them, certain facts which were perceived beforehand were surely confirmed. The so-called Moderates in our Synod will fight, one way or another, for two things and never give in. First, they

(Continued on Page 5)

Historical-Critical Method Day At Convocation

TUESDAY, April 15, 1975, may well be remembered as an historic day in the annals of the LC-MS. On this day the theological Convocation dealt with the most burning theological issue in the Synod. In the morning session three papers were read. Dr. Martin Franzmann served as Presentor, reading a paper entitled "Historical-Critical Method." This was followed by a written thirty minute reaction by Dr. Harold Buls, representing the Conservative viewpoint. Then Dr. Ralph Klein, Professor at Seminex, representing the Moderates, offered a thirty minute reaction.

In the evening in plenary session, 7-9 p.m., after buzz sessions on these papers, the Convocation addressed questions to their authors.

What happened? The undersigned reports things as he saw them from the stage.

1) The news releases are correct in saying that disagreement showed itself on this day of the Convocation. Perhaps the LCUSA release overstates the matter when it says that there were "heated" clashes. At any rate, all news releases agree that Convocation participants disagreed on the use and definition of the Historical-Critical Method. Conservatives are convinced that this method of handling the Bible leads to disaster. Moderates deny that. And that is bound to lead to disagreement. Is there a difference between the theologies of the two parties? Most decidedly there is. The Moderate position opens the door to human questioning of the contents of the Word; the Conservative position accepts it as the inspired and inerrant Word of God.

2) There is no doubting that the Presentor, Dr. Franzmann, did not come to grips with the issues. The very fact that Dr. Klein could and did commend Dr. Franzmann for his paper is proof enough of that. Frankly, the Presentor's paper was disappointing. It was not the old Franzmann. He said very little, if anything, about the dangers in this method of interpretation. What he said was good. All of us are indeed in need of daily repentance. But what of the issues? Practically nothing. In the evening session a delegate read a statement in opposition to the Historical-Critical Method made by Dr. Franzmann a decade ago while he was chairman of the Exegetical Department at Concordia, St. Louis. The delegate then asked Dr. Franzmann whether or not he still holds to that statement. Dr. Franzmann in response made it as clear as he could that he still stands on that statement and then tried to convince the audience that that statement and the paper which he had just read are not at variance with each other. But they are. Rather than to attempt to summarize the four page statement, here is the last paragraph of the statement made by Dr. Franzmann a decade ago:

Those who advocate and practice this (Historical-Critical) method are required, therefore, to ask themselves whether such a method is compatible with their ordination vows, which bound them to Scripture in the absolute obedience of faith and pledged them to the Lutheran Confessions. They are called upon to ask themselves in all seriousness: Is an exegetical method which, e.g. questions (or rarifies) step for step the nexus, established by the New Testament itself, between prophecy and fulfillment, between the Old Testament and the New, compatible with the absolute submission to the apostolic word which that word by its nature demands? Are the great twin facts of the Paraclete and the Apostolate being taken seriously? *Can a method which deals as it does with the*

facts of the inspired record claim any connection with the absolute submission to the Word which characterizes the Lutheran Confessions? It is not a question of coming into conflict with a peculiarly Missourian tradition or idiosyncrasy; the issue raised by the acceptance of this method involves a conflict with the bases of our Lutheran, Christian experience. (Italics added).

THIS final sentence means that the very existence of Lutheran Doctrine, based on the Scriptures, is at stake when one begins dabbling with the Historical-Critical Method. Now, has the situation changed since Dr. Franzmann penned these words a decade ago? If anything, things have gotten worse. In one sense they are better: the cover-up in the Missouri Synod has been revealed. God saw to that and for that we ought to be very grateful. But, now everything depends, under God, on how we react to the cover-up. Shall we act as if nothing happened? Shall we compromise? Or, shall we be faithful to the Scriptures?

For whatever reason, Dr. Franzmann avoided the essential issues as Presentor. And that is why Dr. Klein, as Moderate reactor, could sing the praises of Dr. Franzmann at the beginning and end of his paper. Both Dr. Franzmann and Dr. Klein want to make it appear as though there is little difference between the two theologies.

3) Dr. Klein, in his paper, *does* speak with "a forked tongue" as he was accused by one delegate in the evening session. In his paper Dr. Klein plainly hides what he believes and stands for. Dr. Buls accused Dr. Klein of teaching which is unLutheran and un-Christian. Two instances came out in the evening session. In his paper Dr. Buls maintains that the very article of justification by faith is at stake in the controversy. In other words, if we don't stop what's going on, we shall lose the central doctrine of our faith. Dr. Buls was asked by one of the delegates to prove that. This led to an exchange between the two reactors. Dr. Buls asked Dr. Klein whether Genesis 3:15 is the *protevangel* (the first pronouncement of Gospel). Klein's answer, in summary, was: "no." Dr. Buls then read for the audience what Dr. Klein has written about Genesis 12:3: "In thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Galatians 3:8 quotes this passage as a pure Gospel reference to our Lord and Savior given to Abraham. But according to Dr. Klein, in the Old Testament this passage meant that people should by a blessing to each other, should heal fractured human relationships. Therefore Galatians 3:8 is only a new application of an Old Testament saying. But Lutherans have always maintained that we must take St. Paul seriously when he writes that Scripture was preaching Gospel to Abraham when it said: "In thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

DR. Buls, on the basis of evidence, made some very serious accusations not only against Dr. Klein but also against another Seminex professor. All delegates at the Convocation received copies of this paper. By this time it has been broadcast throughout Synod.

What do we do now? We cannot and dare not yield or compromise anything concerning God's Word. However difficult it is, we must stand fast! We pray our heavenly Father to make us faithful unto death for Jesus' sake!

Dr. Harold H. Buls
Concordia Theological Seminary
Springfield, Illinois

The Church Under The Scriptures

TWO essays, one by Prof. Ralph A. Bohlmann, acting president of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., and another by Prof. Herbert J. A. Bouman of Seminex, spoke to this important theme at the recent Convocation in St. Louis. In many ways it was the real grist in the mill; for the question today is, Does Missouri intend to stand under the Scriptures or not? It is one thing to say it; it is quite another to say it and then act otherwise.

Let me illustrate. One of the reactors, or respondents, at the Convocation had in effect denied that Genesis 3, 15, which speaks of Eve's seed crushing the Serpent's head, was the *protevangeli-um*, or first Gospel, among the many Old Testament promises of the Messiah. This, in spite of the fact that Eve herself at the birth of her firstborn, Cain, thought that she had the fulfillment of the promise; for the literal translation of Genesis 4, 1 is: "I have gotten a man, Jehovah, or the Lord!"

Had such denial on the floor of Synod, or one of its districts, sounded forth 20 or so years ago, there would have been gasps of disbelief and rebukes from every side of the room. How could it be that in 1975 the 300 delegates to the Convocation just sat there? Placidity? Nonchalantly (an attitude urged upon them by one of the esteemed speakers regards Scripture's authority)? The answer lies in what has happened to Synod in these last 20 years on just this point: the Church *Under* the Scriptures.

The Trojan horse is at the gates. The Seminex threat is precisely this: that it is trying to convince Missouri to let that old nag in, arguing that "toleration of differing ways of interpreting the Bible are harmless" and in fact "helpful." "We won't harm the church." "You don't have to be afraid of us." "We won't disturb the faith." "The Confessional standards of the Church—why, be assured, we won't and don't intend to interfere with them." "Just allow us a little elbow room." "We ask only for a little evangelical tolerance."

Let's not forget it, this is error's way of insinuating itself in the Church, as history bears out. It always starts by asking for toleration. Give it time and it won't be long before it asks for equal status alongside truth, as though both were valuable in teaching us how to avoid bigotry. Just so there's peace, peace, and the church is not disturbed. It is the ancient art of learning how to agree to disagree; that's the great "secret" of modern-day church-statesmanship. But then comes the end, when error takes over completely and truth goes shipping down the proverbial creek. Now it's the attack on Genesis 3, 15, and the historicity of the fall into sin. Eventually the church will stand *under* the Scriptures at *no point*. Supremacy will be on the side of those whose posture can best be described as sitting in judgment over the Scriptures, deciding what it can possibly be saying to us in this day.

OBVIOUSLY, then the Bible is no longer doing the talking and the reader the listening; but the reader—learned scholar or just Mr. Average-man—is talking to it, telling *It* what, if anything, it can say to *him*.

The essays of Bohlmann and Bouman contrasted sharply. Bohlmann's was not only a brilliant masterpiece of composition, but a very plain, clear undergirding of the historic Lutheran stance on Scripture. Bouman's was an emotional (at least in its written form), saddening effort which tried to vindicate the abortive actions of the "801 faculty majority" who walked off their jobs and brought their so-called "case" to the public press. They refused to channel their dissent under the rubrics of Synod's Constitution and Bylaws. The following excerpts illustrate how wide the gulf is.

Bohlmann, urging continuing loyalty to Synod's historic stance, stated:

... "those who take issue with the Scriptures generally want to avoid the suggestion that they are not 'under' the Scriptures..."

... the Church, "the assembly of believers," is "recognized by the pure and right use of the Gospel and Sacraments" and "unity is found where the Gospel and sacraments are used purely and rightly..."

... "for the Confessions it is self-evident that the norm for determining what is 'pure' preaching of the Gospel and 'right' administration of the sacraments is the word of God, Holy Scripture," and not some "free-floating" ideas, but God's own "inspired and inerrant Scriptures..."

... "every trifling with or disdain for the Word of God is an act of pride and rebellion against God Himself..."

... "what we claim is that a less-than-complete commitment to the Scriptures, and uncertainty about their truthfulness, a hesitancy or disagreement with regard to some of their contents, or a way of interpreting them that makes open questions out of apostolic teachings, will endanger the proclamation of the Gospel..."

... "so the Church *under* Scripture does not approach *any* of the Scriptures with a method that is not suited to, or is even opposed to, the character of Holy Scripture as the Word of God..."

... it is a misuse of our Confessions (especially AC VII), to hold "that many doctrinal positions can exist side by side within the same fellowship without disrupting the fellowship..."

... so, our Synod "has consistently rejected as 'unionism' any expression of fellowship that ignores genuine differences in doctrine and treats them as though they were unimportant..."

... "doctrinal discipline is necessary for the preservation of the Gospel among us" and it "is not legalistic, as some assert," but "commanded by God," in order "to serve as a fraternal admonition to the separated brethren," that the unity of the church may be preserved...

... finally, "for the church *under* the Scriptures, considerations of truth must take precedence over considerations of love..."

IN contrast to Bohlmann's forthright statement of how the church stands obediently under the Scriptures, came Bouman's essay. The difference lay not in that he failed to define the nature of the Church properly, or state its mission truly, or attest its resources fairly. The difference lay primarily in the attitude over against Synod and its action in calling a halt to further eroding of its doctrinal stance. While disclaiming intent to "judge any man's heart," Bouman defended Seminex's activities by branding Synod's efforts to uphold its doctrinal integrity as:—"fruits of fanaticism," "irrational behavior," "loss of self-control," "despotic abuse of power," "vindictive dismissals," "unconscionable brainwashing," "foulest demagoguery."

Dismissing the validity of the charges that had been leveled by the New Orleans Convention in Resolution 3-09 against erosion of Biblical authority and Gospel-reductionism, Bouman labeled all charges against the Seminex position as "caricatures." Love ought to dictate a kindlier attitude toward Seminex's unwillingness to abide by Synod's rules and regulations, he contended. In other words, their arbitrary walk-off from their called positions in the church should be viewed as allowable, on the

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The Lord's Supper: Symbol of Christian Unity

Many conservatives did not attend the Communion service at the Convocation. In these paragraphs Dr. Scaer states the scriptural basis for their action.

THE April 14-18, 1975 Theological Convocation, convened at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, has once more focused the attention of Missouri Synod Lutherans on the meaning of the Lord's Supper as a symbol of Christian unity. The Council of Presidents, the conveners of the Convocation, did so with the expressed purpose of restoring unity to a badly divided church body. The editors of the *Lutheran Witness* (March 16, 1975) and President J. A. O. Preus in a preface to the printed collection of the essays for the Convocation called down God's blessings upon these efforts. The prayer of Dr. Preus certainly was the prayer of all of us:

It is also my prayer that this Convocation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit might provide an opportunity for a discussion of the issues troubling our church today and that it might be an instrument for effecting reconciliation and peace in the church under the Holy Scriptures, so that we may all "with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

President Preus has set forth the Holy Scriptures as the only means through which reconciliation could take place. Agreement that the Scriptures are the word of God and the only source of Christian doctrine together with agreement in what those Scriptures teach is the minimum and maximum requirement for the church unity. From all corners of the church, Conservative and Moderate, the clarion for reconciliation has been sounded. Few are those who have not heard it and listened. The call for reconciliation was itself the personal confession of everyone involved that the church is critically divided. Where there is a cry for reconciliation there are two differing parties. Consider the chasm between the holy God and the sinful race of men. Reconciliation was needed. Jesus Christ as the Reconciler brought together two separate parties, God and man, through the blood of His cross. Today the Missouri Synod might be one organization and administrative structure, but there are two parties, or churches that need to be reconciled to one another.

BECAUSE God has reconciled us to Himself in Jesus, we are to reconcile ourselves to Him and in turn to one another. Before there can be reconciliation with one another, we must be certain that there is indeed as St. Paul says "one faith" which we all confess. No expertise is required to know that in the Missouri Synod there are disagreements about what the "one faith" is. Each group has produced confessions of their faith. All these documents indicate that in the Missouri Synod we can no longer say that there is "one faith." This is made clear since each group has judged the position of the other. It is for the reestablishing of the "one faith" as a common ground of all in our Synod that the Convocation was called. The Convocation was not unique in this respect. Consider Nicea or Augsburg. Wherever churches officially and publicly meet, whether at Synod, district, circuit, or congregation meetings there the church meets to confess the one faith.

The prior announcement of a service of Holy Communion at the end of the Convocation was premature. Nothing would be more glorious on earth than for divided brothers to celebrate their agreed upon unity in the faith by a celebration of our Lord's Supper. But if this is our understanding of Holy Communion, why was the service for divided brothers announced several months in advance when there was no certain assurance that the desired unity would be reached? Holy Communion is the symbol of the unity that like-minded persons have in their allegiance to the teachings of Jesus. It is not the means or the agent to bring reconciliation about. This is the understanding of the New Testament church and indeed the church till the 18th century when Wesley, the founder of the Methodist denomination, said that

Holy Communion could be a means of conversion or regeneration. This is a perversion of the New Testament understanding of this sacrament. We do not come to the table of the Lord to become one, but we come because we are already one in the common expression of faith in Him. Though Wesley was a Protestant, this concept of using the sacrament as a tool or instrument is very mechanical and magical. Participation in the Lord's Supper no more guarantees that all church divisions will be healed among the participants any more than Baptism guarantees that all who are baptized will believe and be saved. Just as Baptism assumes faith, so the participation in the Lord's Supper assumes that all agreed in the faith. Some hold that the admonition of Jesus to make peace with your brother before bringing your gift to the altar was recorded by the Evangelist as a requirement for unity before receiving the Lord's Supper together. This is how early Christians understood it. But it is because there is no agreement in the faith that Convocation had been called. All participants were made aware of this.

SOME will say that all in the Missouri Synod or in Christianity, including those at the Convocation have faith in Jesus. No one wants to quarrel with this if this means saving faith. In fact, no one should pass judgment on the sincerity of another person or how he stands in a saving relationship to God through faith in Jesus. This only the Holy Spirit knows and never men. But we are required by Jesus and the Holy Apostles to distinguish among the various public statements of the faith, which are known as Confessions. In doing this we are not being judgmental on the soul of any man, but making sure that each is indeed proclaiming the voice of the Good Shepherd. Where we hear another voice, then we know that it is not the voice of Jesus.

It is not sufficient to say that we all confess the same Jesus. For one group, Jesus is the God-Man, actually performing miracles, including those disturbing the usual course of nature. For another group, there can be legitimate doubts whether or not Jesus actually performed this or that miracle. They hold that perhaps the miracle story was just a literary device of a later writer or an invention of the church. There has been a clear case in point about the miracle of the changing of the water into wine. There has been no publicly printed repudiation of *Time* report that this miracle is indeed denied. How about Jonah? One group puts its faith in a Jesus who held that Jonah was really swallowed by the fish and on the third day released. This group holds that Jesus truly believed in this account as historically true and saw this as evidence for His own resurrection. The other group permits the view that Jesus accommodated himself—deliberately or ignorantly—to a false notion among the Jews of His day. Or perhaps their Jesus never told the Jonah story at all.

IT will simply not do to say that all who use the word JESUS confess and profess the same Jesus. In the history of the church, all involved in controversy said they believed in Jesus. For example, Luther and Calvin. For Luther, Jesus filled heaven and earth; but for Calvin, Jesus was confined to a cubicle in heaven. The word JESUS was the same, but what each meant was world's apart.

Due probably to the leveling influence of mushy ecumenical thinking, many church leaders today believe that Holy Communion in the early church was a kind of open end cafeteria line. This flies smack in the face of the New Testament and church history. All this evidence has been gathered in one of those much overlooked books. Werner Elert, a deceased German Lutheran theologian, who was not in fellowship with the Missouri Synod, published this material in *Eucharist and Church Fellowship in the First Four Centuries* (It is available from CPH at \$7.95). Where there was no agreement in doctrine, there was no fellowship at the Lord's Supper. Agreement in doctrine was a for

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The Historical-Critical Method

One of the articles in this issue refers to a statement issued, ca. 1960, by Dr. Franzmann. It is worth reproducing in full—and his paragraphs follow.

I. The Historical-Critical Method cannot be considered as merely a theologically-neutral tool or technique of interpretation, comparable to textual criticism, grammar, or lexicography. None of these latter undertakes to pass a value judgment on the historical substance of revelation; the Historical-Critical Method does. The historical method assigns to the interpreter the capacity and the authority to distinguish between "the facts which matter and the facts which don't." According to the Historical-Critical Method those facts which, in the interpreter's judgment, do not count, may be marked by him as non-factual embellishments upon the facts or as a merely symbolical-mythical enunciation of a theological truth. This is done even by conservative practitioners of the method again and again in cases where the records themselves are obviously intent upon recording plain, literal, historical fact and give no indication that they are speaking figuratively or symbolically. A few examples, all from conservative representatives, may serve to illustrate:

- 1) It is considered possible or even probable that the story of the Magi (Matthew 2) is a Christian Midrash rather than authentic history, "though the compiler of the Gospel may not have recognized its true character" (Levertoff and Goudge).
- 2) Matthew 28:11-15 "Such stories as this are like those of the Apocryphal Gospels. They greatly confirm our confidence in the truth of the Gospel narratives as a whole by showing how little the early Christians possessed the faculty of plausible invention" (Levertoff and Goudge).
- 3) Matthew 5:17-19 is dismissed as "pure rabbinism" and impossible in the mouth of Jesus (Hunter).
- 4) Matthew 9:15. It is admitted that the Evangelist understood Jesus to be calling Himself the Bridegroom, but the fact that Judaism did not know the Bridegroom Messiah identification (and the prediction of Jesus' death in the second half of the verse) marks the saying as Gemeindebildung (J. Jeremias).
- 5) Matthew 14:28-31. Peter walking on the Sea. Story is hard to credit because (a) Mark omits it; (b) "It is not probable that Peter at this state in the development of his faith, would have offered to walk upon the sea . . . Probably we have again a Christian Midrash" (Levertoff and Goudge).
- 6) The "Tradition" changes parables into stories e.g. Widow's Mite, blasting of the Fig Tree.
- 7) Raising of Lazarus "We have to do, not with a historical event to be taken literally but with a freely formed symbolical narrative which utilizes and develops Synoptic elements, especially Lucan elements, designed to impress upon the reader . . . the truth of Jesus' words of Martha, John 11:25-26" (Strathmann).

II. The Fact must be faced that there is no really effective way of controlling or limiting the process of deciding between which facts count and which don't. Bultmann, to take an extreme example by way of illustrating the problem, takes the ground that in the last analysis none of the facts counts ("ich lasz es ruhig brennen"). The Confessions cannot be invoked as a controlling force, for the Confessions have their strength in the

Scripture which they interpret and summarize; in the measure that Scripture is made subject to the autonomous judgment of the interpreter, the Confessions too will lose their controlling force and their normative authority. Once the basic premise of the critical approach is conceded, one can no longer talk of pure doctrine; one can only talk of a more or less sane or successful applications of the method; e.g. if a Lutheran theologian comes to the conviction that the Virgin Birth is one of the facts that doesn't count, who is going to convince him (and convict him), *on the premises of this method*, that it is a fact that does count? And it should be obvious that, on the premises of the Historical-Critical Method, the most vulnerable fact in the New Testament is the fact of the Resurrection.

III. Those who advocate and practice this method are required, therefore, to ask themselves whether such a method is compatible with their ordination vows, which bound them to Scripture in the absolute obedience of faith and pledged them to the Lutheran Confessions. They are called upon to ask themselves in all seriousness: Is an exegetical method which, e.g. questions (or rarefies) step for step the nexus, established by the New Testament itself, between prophecy and fulfillment, between the Old Testament and the New, compatible with the absolute submission to the apostolic word which that word by its nature demands? Are the great twin facts of the Paraclete and the Apostolate being taken seriously? Can a method which deals as it does with the facts of the inspired record claim any connection with the absolute submission to the word which characterizes the Lutheran Confessions? It is not a question of coming into conflict with a peculiarly Missourian tradition or idiosyncrasy; the issue raised by the acceptance of this method involves a conflict with the bases of our Lutheran, Christian, existence.

Dr. Martin H. Franzmann, *Em.*
Cambridge, England

Impression (Continued from Page 1)

will insist on defending and using the Historical-Critical Method, even though they are unable and/or unwilling even to define it. Second, they believe there are errors in the Bible even though they are willing to use the shibboleth term "inerrancy" (with their definition, of course, or again, with no definition attached to it at all). We must ask ourselves whether these two clear facts are important. Is the inerrancy of Scripture an Article of Faith worth fighting for and divisive of fellowship? Is the Historical-Critical Method as it is described and used all over the world today, to be used by Christians who believe that the Scriptures are God's Word, divinely authoritative in all their utterances, inerrant in all their assertions, Christ-centered, exhibiting one doctrine, clear, teaching one Gospel and way of salvation, and powerful to make wise unto salvation?

If these two issues, which were discussed but not settled at the Convocation, will be faced by our Synod and settled, then the Convocation, in spite of all of its frustrations, will indeed prove to be a blessing to our church.

Dr. Robert Preus, President
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Why the Long Controversy?

THE theological Convocation is over. As announced, it was a no-resolution and no-vote meeting. One good result was that no precious time was wasted jockeying for votes or struggling over the wording of proposed resolutions.

But such a no-decision meeting also poses problems. For one thing, evaluation is made more difficult. For another, simply by being open-ended, it leaves uncertain as to what really was achieved, what was left unresolved, and where we go from here.

It is agreed by all that we do have doctrinal differences in Missouri. Getting this fact into the open is a major achievement when one reflects on two decades during which our problems were swept under the rug. However, one serious defect in the Convocation was the studied effort to minimize these differences as being of little import and of no threat to the faith.

One important question, and it is the point of these lines, is this: *Why is it taking Missouri so long to settle this conflict?* Why do the doctrinal differences continue to plague us? With Bible in hand, should we not finally be able to say: this is true and that is false?

A backward glance at church history is of value. The Christian church has always had conflicts. Various doctrines have marked its path throughout its history. It has always been and will be, until the Glory Day, a "church militant."

SHORTLY after our Lord founded His church, with the Gospel barely on its way into the Gentile world, e.g., the Judaizers claimed that the Gentiles' salvation depended on faith in Christ plus observance of the Jewish ceremonial laws. Many today would write their insistence off as a Jewish quirk of little or no consequence. But in the righteous wrath of his letter to the Galatians, Paul scores this as a serious heresy and a violation of the doctrine of salvation by grace.

Another major doctrinal controversy arose in the early 300's A.D. when a devout and sincere religious teacher, Arius by name, taught that Jesus was more than man but less than God. Result? The Council of Nicaea was called and produced the strong reassertion of the deity of Christ in the second Article of the Nicene Creed with its repetitious phrases ("God of God, light of light, etc.") which nail down and counter-sink the fact that Christ is God.

Our Lutheran Confessions, the Book of Concord, had its origin largely in doctrinal differences, and came as a Scripture-based answer to a host of false dogmas inherited from the Middle Ages.

And our own beloved Missouri Synod also has had its share of doctrinal controversies in its 125-year history. And it settled them.

How were these and a host of other controversies concluded? Dr. Fred Kramer in his convocation essay, "Gospel-Scripture Relationship," put his finger on it: "When serious disagreements of a doctrinal nature arise, as they have arisen among us, we need to do what the apostles did when the errors of Judaizing teachers threatened to rend the infant church into two opposing camps. They met; both sides stated their views. The views were examined according to the facts and according to the Scriptures, and then peace was restored. Acts 15."

NOTE the phrase, "according to the Scriptures." In a doctrinal controversy, when two men, both sincere, both convinced that they are right, both fallible, want to settle the matter, their fallible convictions must be submitted for evaluation and decision to an infallible third party. And that has always been the answer—"according to the Scriptures, and then peace was restored." It was simply a matter of determining what Scripture, the infallible third party, had to say.

Why, then, has our present controversy dragged on for about 20 years? Why is there no end to it? The answer is as simple as it

is profound and disturbing. *For the first time in Synod's history the controversy is about Scripture itself.* For the first time the judge who has always settled our differences is now questioned.

At the root of all our trouble is the Historical-Critical Method of interpretation, which is as much an attitude toward the Bible as it is a method of interpreting it. Its fatal weakness, as Dr. Martin Franzmann wrote some 15 years ago, is that this method "undertakes to pass a value judgment on the historical substance of revelation," it "assigns to the interpreter the capacity and the authority to distinguish between 'the facts which matter and the facts which don't.'" He concludes, "The fact must be faced that there is no really effective way of controlling or limiting the process of deciding between which facts count and which don't." He points out that even the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection can become "facts which don't count."

PUT simply, the Historical-Critical Method of interpreting the Bible makes it impossible to get a decision from that Bible. When those who are supposed to be obedient to the Word assume the "capacity and the authority" to decide what is fact and what is fiction in that Word, then there can be no decision rendered by that Word and the controversy will be endless.

By God's grace, there are still vast areas of doctrinal agreement within our Synod, optimistically, perhaps 90 percent. But the 10 percent under controversy lies at the beating heart of our church—the question of Scripture itself. If the reliability of Scripture goes, the areas of agreement are doomed to erosion. The Convocation program committee was correct in selecting the theme, "The Nature and Function of Holy Scripture."

We say (Constitution, Article II) that the Scriptures are "the only rule and norm of faith and of practice." In view of the present controversy, we cannot stop there. The related question, "What Scriptures?" must be asked and it must be answered. And it must be answered soon. The plea, heard at the Convocation and elsewhere, that Anaheim "must not take precipitous action" has an emotional appeal. But in loving firmness, Synod must reject this call or be derelict in its duty to God.

The controversy has hampered and, in some areas, all but halted the real mission of the church, "Preach the Gospel to every creature." We must get back to our God-assigned task. We can only do this if we decide now, at least for this our day, what Word it is that we are proclaiming!

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A Fresh Breeze A'Blowing

IN response to a previous essay of Dr. Paul Bretscher, I issued "A Plea for Honesty in the New Theology" and subsequently I thanked him for his honesty ("Honesty is the Best Policy," *Affirm*, Jan., 1973, p. 3). And now I wish to thank Dr. Bretscher again, because he has been more forthright than ever before in his recent book, *After the Purifying*,¹ in which he states very clearly and precisely what is new and different in the "new theology" of the Liberals in our Synod. To my knowledge, never before has any one of the Liberals in our Synod stated their deviation from Lutheran doctrine so clearly. I wish to applaud this new approach which, like a lightning bolt, should clear the air of much that has polluted it before.

Dr. Bretscher declares that the new theology of the Elimites, etc., is different from the historic doctrine of the Missouri Synod, of Lutheranism and of Luther himself. His contention is that not only the Missouri Synod but Luther himself misunderstood the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture.² He still doesn't go far enough, even in his most recent book, since he claims that his new theology is also within the stream of Lutheranism and the Lutheran Confessions (which it is not). But this much alone constitutes a fresh breeze which is blowing.

The Issue Is Doctrine

He states categorically that the issue is doctrinal. That's what true Missourians and Lutherans have been saying all along. The issue isn't political; it is not personalities; it is not abuse of ecclesiastical power structures; it is doctrine. And Bretscher emphasizes that when he says: "The real dross (mistakes and errors) lies *within* our doctrine . . . inherent in the very 'doctrinal' position."³ And, according to him, the historic doctrine of the church is wrong. He says "tradition, meaning 'the way I was brought up, the way I was taught . . . can err.'"⁴ In other words, the doctrine which our church has always taught is in error, according to Bretscher. He is accusing our Synod, and Lutheranism, and Luther himself of having been in error in the past. And now, with *his* new insights, the church should be compelled to change its doctrinal stance and the teachings which it has received from Scripture and which it has always believed.

The Doctrine Is God's Word

And then he goes on to point out that the basic doctrinal issue is the doctrine of the Scripture. At which point he falls back into the Gospel reductionism which has dominated the Liberal theology throughout. He claims that only the Gospel within the Scriptures is inspired and that "the rest of Scripture" (his phrase) is not necessarily inspired but must be examined and understood like any other piece of secular literature or non-inspired history, which can be mistaken and wrong and in need of reinterpretation. "Critical study of the Bible would be impossible without some change of attitude toward the authority of the Scripture," he claims.⁵

Here are some quotes from Bretscher on the doctrine of Scripture: "The Scriptures (as an authority principle) became a stumbling block in our path."⁶ It is a "fallacy" to "magnify the Scriptures themselves, even apart from their Gospel, as 'the Word of God.'"⁷ He speaks of a "theological reality" (Gospel) versus an "historical reality" ("the rest of Scripture") and says "Our personal historicity is not different in kind from the historicity of our forefathers who wrote the Bible."⁸ And in making this distinction between "Gospel" and "the rest of Scripture" he says "we are dealing with two different orders of 'truth'."⁹ He distinguishes between "Synod's traditional understanding of the Bible's inspiration . . . and . . . inescapable questions critical study was raising."¹⁰

"Compromise and Insincerity"

In response to this new theology which the Liberals have been trying to foist upon our Synod, others as well as I have pointed out that they have not been honest in attempting to change the doctrine without telling the church they were doing so. And Bretscher confirms that charge. Speaking about their professed "loyalty to Article II of Synod's constitution 'without reservation,'" he says: "the meaning of this confession differed now from the meaning they themselves had once found in these very same words . . . Those who had in reality been changed by . . . critical study could still insist that they were not deviating from Synod's doctrinal and confessional position . . . They used old words like 'inspired' and 'inerrant' without rejecting or even challenging their mistaken application." and he says that "the net effect was one of compromise and insincerity."¹¹

Elevating Reason Over Revelation

There are a couple of other important statements that he makes which should help to clear the air. One of these is his admission that he has fallen into the Reformed trap of elevating reason as a judge over the Scripture, The Word of God. He says "Because the Bible derives from, belongs to and expresses the history and experience of men, it is *subject* to every process of rational inquiry . . ." This is subjecting the revelation of God to human reason, making reason a judge over the Scripture, and that is something that Luther and the Lutheran theologians throughout history have strenuously rejected.

What Is Truth?

Is it any wonder then that he can come up with this relativity, when he says: "What matters now is not who among us is right or wrong." According to such a statement, it should not matter whether God's Word is right or wrong, whether we have the truth or not, whether we can be sure or not of what God tells us. But for the life of me I cannot understand why, if he really means that statement, he so strenuously contends for his error—if it doesn't make any difference what is right or wrong anyway.

I want to personally thank Dr. Paul Bretscher for undertaking this assignment in honesty. Such a clarion call to error should be held up for every member of the Missouri Synod to see very clearly. I am glad that someone in the Liberal camp has had the honesty finally to admit it in such clear, unambiguous and simple words as those just quoted. Now we should be able the more easily to sort out truth and error, right and wrong. I, for one, opt for the inspired words of our Lord Jesus in His inspired Scriptures when He said: "If ye continue in my word, ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

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1 "Thirty-second Yearbook, Lutheran Education Association, 7400 Augusta Street, River Forest, Ill. 1975

2 In a previous essay, "The Long In Your Own Eye," "Concordia Theological Monthly," Vol. XLIII (Nov., 1972), p. 676; he says that Luther and the classical Lutheran theologians were not able to properly evaluate the principle of "the authority of the Bible as the inspired and errant Word of God;" and that they were wrong in the approach they opted for.

3 Paul G. Bretscher, *After the Purifying*, p. 62.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 64.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 100.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 67.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 74.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 78.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 91.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 101.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 102.

HCM—Challenges and Attacks

Reliability and Authority of Jesus Christ

THE Historical-Critical Method, a development of the age of rationalism and of the period of the enlightenment, when human reason became the arbiter as to what in the Bible could be believed and what was to be rejected, affects the very heart of the Christian faith. This is the case because it challenges and impugns the reliability and truthfulness of Jesus as a Teacher sent from God. The claim that the Historical-Critical Method if employed with Lutheran presupposition can safely be employed by Lutheran Biblical interpreters simply is not born out by the facts in the case, as can be seen when the interpretative efforts of Lutheran utilizers of the Historical-Critical Method are examined.

The Historical-Critical Method is a methodology that in the course of the last two hundred years has constantly been changing but one element in it has not been altered and that is this method's challenge of the facts and truths as stated in the Old and New Testaments. Even the assertions and statements of Christ are questioned, doubted and rejected.

The major components of the Historical-Critical Method are the following: a negative type of literary criticism, form criticism, redaction criticism and content criticism. While each of these differs from the other in respects to its presuppositions and the conclusions arrived at by these different kinds of criticism, they all result in raising doubts in the minds of Christians as to what actually the Bible says and what can reliably be accepted as trustworthy.

In the present article the results of Old Testament literary criticism will be portrayed as to the reliability of Christ's assertions about the authorship of the Pentateuch. Old Testament literary criticism of a negative type began when certain European scholars rejected the authorship of the Five Books of Moses, instead of holding that Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy had been authored by Moses. The end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth saw the advancement and the adoption by Lutheran Scholars of the view that first five Old Testament books were actually a mosaic put together by priests in Babylonia out of documents, labelled by critics, the J-document, the E-document, the D-document and the P-document. Instead of the first five Old Testament books being available around 1400 B.C. they were depicted as only coming into existence in their present form around 400 B.C.

PROFESSOR North in his article, "Pentateuch" in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible* (1963), p. 744 wrote: "That Moses was the author of the Pentateuch was for long unquestioned. The basis of this belief was the Jewish tradition of its origin which the Christian Church took over with the books themselves. Although it is nowhere said in the Old Testament that Moses wrote the whole of the Pentateuch there is little doubt that the words 'the book of the law of Moses' (Nehemiah 8:1, and cf. Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, *passim*) were, by the beginning of the Christian era, understood to imply that he did. Similarly, the New Testament takes Moses' authorship for granted and it can hardly be denied that our Lord shared the same view."

Artur Weiser, *The Old Testament: Its Formation and Development* (New York: Association Press, 1961) admits: "In the latter literature of the Old Testament Moses was considered to be the transmitter and probably also the author of the law in Malachi 3:22; 2 Chronicles 25:4; 35:12; Ezra 3:3; 7:6. That Moses composed the whole Pentateuch is first explicitly asserted in the works of Philo and Josephus. This view is proposed also in the New Testament in Matthew 19:7f; Mark 12:26;

John 5:26; John 5:46f.; Acts 15:21; Romans 10:5. With few exceptions it has remained the prevailing tradition of the Christian Church unchallenged up to the seventeenth century" (p. 72).

Honest critical scholars admit that both the Old Testament, especially in the books that originated toward the close of the Old Testament period, and the New Testament taught the Mosaic authorship of the Old Testament's first five books. The Lutheran higher-critical scholar Kuhl, *The Old Testament: Its Origins and Composition*. John Knox Press, 1961, p. 47 wrote: "The title 'Five Books of Moses' not only suggests that the books are mainly about Moses, but also that they are by him. And, indeed, this is the opinion of Jewish tradition from the time of Philo of Alexandria, and Josephus, contemporaries of Jesus, expressly declared that the Pentateuch is undoubtedly the work of Moses."

THE Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch (the first five O.T. books) is not merely a tradition but a fact. To his contemporaries Jesus said: "If you believe *Moses*, you believe me. But if you do not believe *his writings*, how will you believe my words?" (John 5:46) (*Italics supplied*). Here Jesus speaks of a group of writings, which the Jews and Jesus were convinced were found in the first five Old Testament books.

In the Gospels, the evangelists report Jesus quoting from four books of the Pentateuch and ascribing quotations in each book to Moses. In Luke 16:29, Jesus depicts Abraham as saying to Dives, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' Here the first portion of the Old Testament is ascribed to Moses by Christ. In Mark 12:26, in answer to the Sadducees, Jesus said: "And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the *book of Moses*, in the passage about the bush, how God said to him, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' " Here Jesus Christ refers to Exodus 3:6 which critical scholars have assigned to the J-source (supposedly of the tenth century B.C. or even ninth century origin.) Critical scholars are in direct conflict with Jesus, who claimed to be God, on the matter of the Mosaic authorship of Exodus, an integral part of the five books of Moses. In another Marcan passage, 10:3 Jesus is reported as saying 'What did Moses command you?' They said, 'Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of divorce, and put her away.' The reference is to Deuteronomy 24:1, 2 which our Lord ascribed to Moses, but which the critics claim represents the thinking of a seventh century B.C. group of writers and not Moses.

In still another Marcan passage, we read: "For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and 'He who speaks evil of his father or his mother, etc.' " In this passage Jesus referred to verses that are found in Exodus 21:12; Deuteronomy 5:16; Leviticus 20:9 and all are ascribed to Moses, a position in direct conflict with the Documentary Hypothesis of the critics, a theory which has been taught in certain schools of the LC-MS for the last 15 years.

In Matthew 8:4 Matthew reports: "And Jesus said to him, 'see that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift of Moses commanded for a proof.' " In this passage Jesus was referring to Leviticus 13:49ff and 14:26. According to critical scholarship Leviticus is the product of the so-called priestly school, the P-document, said by the critics to have been composed between 500-450 B.C. Yet Jesus asserts that these were laws given by Moses a thousand years earlier and written down by him because they were a part of the Law of Moses.

(Continued on Page 10)

The New Hymnal and Service Book— An Evaluation

A new hymnal is under preparation jointly by the major Lutheran bodies of North America. The author, officially appointed to react to the proposed hymnal, offers his analysis.

If you are interested in lists of specific changes, to be made, AFFIRM will forward a series of tables to you. A self-addressed stamped envelope would be appreciated.

I. Balance in the New Hymnal

In the rationale for the preparation of the new hymnal it is stated that "the present collection is nothing if not balanced." Therefore, some simple statistical techniques were employed to determine the (1) relative sizes of the individual sections in the present hymnal and the new hymnal, (2) the proportion of new hymns in any particular section of the new hymnal, and (3) the proportion of hymns that were excised from the present hymnal that were also contained in the Service Book and Hymnal. The analysis showed that the individual sections which increased the most in size were THE LORD'S SUPPER and BAPTISM. Furthermore, approximately 80 percent of these hymns were new to the LC-MS. The PRAYER section, although not changed in size, contained one hundred percent new material. Because such a proportion of new material in these sections could change the "emphasis," the old and new materials were assigned to Bible Classes for analysis.

Besides having emphasis placed on the Sacraments by increasing the size of these sections, DEATH and BURIAL, FAITH and JUSTIFICATION, THE CHRISTIAN HOME, and CONFESSION were considerably de-emphasized. In addition, the NEW YEAR'S EVE, INVITATION, CONFIRMATION, and THE MINISTRY sections were "eliminated" and the NEW YEAR'S section reduced to one hymn. Thus, there is considerable change in the balance of the hymnal which is being proposed and the present hymnal. I feel that the changes are a bit too "drastic" and in the tables make suggestions which should help alleviate this problem.

Finally, an examination of the proportion of hymns that were excised from the present hymnal that were also contained in the Service Book and Hymnal showed that both hymnals were equally "robbed" in the REDEEMER, LENT, CHRISTIAN WARFARE, CROSS and COMFORT, and EVENING sections. Therefore, these sections were scrutinized for possible change of emphasis. Because the rationale stated that "undoubtedly, some of the familiar hymns that turn up missing in the new book will have been eliminated for Biblical or theological reasons," the texts of the excised hymns were carefully examined to determine whether they had any common theological statements.

II. Blood Theology

An examination of the Lenten hymns *did* indicate that there was a common statement in the excised hymns: "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7). Thus, "Come to Calvary's Holy Mountain," "Sweet the Moments, Rich in Blessing," "There is a Fountain Filled with Blood" and "Glory Be to Jesus," among others, are excised. This is not limited to the Lenten section of the hymnal, however. It spills over into FAITH and JUSTIFICATION (Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness; Just as I Am, without One Plea; Drawn to the Cross, which Thou hast Blest; Blessed Are the Sons of God), THE REDEEMER (Chief of Sinners Though I Be), CONSECRATION (I Gave My Life for Thee), STEWARDSHIP (Lord of Glory, Who hast Bought Us) and TRINITY (God Loved the World So that He Gave). Furthermore, the replacements offered for the Lenten hymns were more vague in their wording.

III. Theology of the Word

An examination of THE WORD section indicates that hymns relating to the law as a guide (How Shall the Young Secure Their Hearts) or a light or lamp or lantern (How Precious Is the Book Divine; Lamp of Our Feet Whereby We Trace; O Word of God Incarnate) are excised. As might be expected, the hymns "May We Thy Precepts, Lord, Fulfill" and "Oh, that the Lord Would Guide My Ways to Keep His Statutes Still" are excised from the NEW OBEDIENCE section. A total of 12 out of the 14 hymns in THE WORD section have been excised with only 3 new ones to replace it. This section has been de-emphasized, as well as having its "balance" changed.

IV. Other Theologies

Although there may be other theological excisions, the above two prove to me that "the Committee on Hymn Texts did . . . bring the devotion of the church into fuller harmony with the development of her theology in the last several decades." However, I don't happen to agree with the "new" theology! I have trouble visualizing Lent without blood and Gospel without law. Such a hymnal is not only unbalanced, it doesn't make sense! As for other theological reasons for removing hymns, I have trouble finding them for "Come, Follow Me, the Savior Spake," "Savior, I Follow On," "Jesus, I My Cross have Taken" and "Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus," among others. But then, maybe they were removed for other reasons.

V. Deletion of Hymns on the Basis of Form

The rationale for selecting hymns suggested that hymns were not only excised on the basis of content, but also on the basis of form, that is "The Committee took every reasonable step it could to see that the collection was . . . more doxological than didactic or hortatory." To give extra weight to hymns of "praise" over hymns that "teach" or "encourage" is not only arbitrary, but, to some extent, non-Lutheran. Some of Luther's finest hymns were didactic, and, not surprisingly, they are missing from the new hymnal. Furthermore, hymns of encouragement are perfectly logical in group worship, because the horizontal and vertical elements are constantly at play. We are to encourage one another. Insisting on only a certain form for a hymn makes us pseudo-Calvinists with "doxological hymns" being substituted for "psalms." Sermons can take many forms, why limit hymns? Were "Fight the Good Fight," "Stand up! Stand Up for Jesus," and "With the Lord Begin Thy Task" eliminated because they "encouraged" us? Frankly, after a careful analysis, although theological reasons and reasons of form can be given for many of the hymns, many choices appear to be purely arbitrary: the familiar gone because it is old, and the new inserted just because it is new.

VI. The New Hymns

Studies in Bible Class of the "new" hymns brought one comment continually. They are vague and lack content. It isn't that they say something wrong, it is just that they don't convey a useful message. The Lord's Supper stresses unity and fellowship as its reason for existence in the new hymns. The "social gospel" hymns stress feeding the body rather than the soul. We need hymns that stress *both* in the same hymn. The rationale admits "with a few exceptions, the new items pale before the classics, whether of Luther or Watts or Chesterton." Then why include them? "Our Father, By Whose Name" is a good hymn.

(Continued on Page 10)

Challenges (Continued from Page 8)

THE stance of Jesus on the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch was also that of Jesus' apostles. The latter apostle Philip, when he found Nathaniel said to the latter: "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Here Philip ascribes the first part of the Old Testament to Moses. In one of the sermons preached by Peter after Pentecost, Simon, at the Gate Beautiful, said to the people: "Moses said, 'the lord God will raise up for you a prophet from your brethren as he raised me up. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you'" (Acts 3:15 [RSV]). Here Peter was citing Deuteronomy 18:15-18 and ascribing the passage to Moses and not to some anonymous writer of the seventh century B.C. St. Paul was visited by a Jewish delegation during his first Roman imprisonment. Among other assertions, Paul said to his fellow religionists: "To this day I have had help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying to both small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses would come to pass" (Acts 28:23). A sizable portion of the Old Testament is assigned by Paul to Moses, a view in conflict with modern higher criticism which denies the authorship of the Pentateuch to Moses.

When Jesus and Peter and Paul stated in clear terms that Moses spoke and wrote down instructions given by God Himself, they were simply asserting a fact which the latter books of the Old Testament (said by Paul to be "God-breathed") had declared. In the days of Josiah the Chronicler reports the following: "While they were bringing out the money that had been brought into the house of the Lord, Hilkiah the priest found the book of the law of the Lord given by the hand of Moses" (2 Chronicles 34:14). During the reign of the same king the author of Chronicles reports: "And they set aside the burnt offerings that they might distribute them according to the groupings of the fathers' houses of the lay people, to offer to the Lord, as it is written in the book of Moses." When the Jews returned from the Babylonian captivity, Ezra reports as follows: "Then arose Joshua the son of Jozadak, with his kinsmen, and they built the altar of God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings upon it, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God" (Ezekiel 3:2) (*Italics supplied*).

WHEN Lutheran critical scholars deny the Mosaic authorship they are impugning the authority, reliability and the credibility of Jesus Christ, as well as challenging the reliability of Christ's Bible, the Old Testament. How, then, can the New Testament assertions that Christ believed the Mosaic authorship be harmonized with the critical rejection of the Mosaic authorship? Lutheran scholars have resorted to two ways to extricate themselves from the dilemma into which they have placed themselves. One answer that has been given is to claim that Jesus held the views of his day, sharing the mistaken ideas of the Jews. This they assert is true because Jesus humbled Himself by divesting Himself of any supernatural knowledge (Philippians 2:8). Thus like Philo, Josephus, Jesus shared their erroneous knowledge about the authorship of Old Testament canonical books. On what basis would one then hold that when Jesus spoke about matters pertaining to salvation, about eternity that He was setting forth the truth, but when speaking about mundane matters, He could be in error? Does Jesus set forth any criterion for rejecting certain of His teachings?

The other explanation given by Lutheran critical scholars for Jesus' alleged misinformation on matters pertaining to Biblical introduction, is the claim that while He knew the real truth He did not wish to upset people by telling them the real facts. In other words, Jesus was deliberately withholding true information about Biblical authorship from the people. Would such a position be in harmony with Christ's assertion: "I am the Way, the Truth and The Life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me?" (John 14:6). Does such an interpretation agree with the

picture of Christ as given in the Gospel who did not hesitate to denounce the leaders in the severest tone, as the "woes" of Matthew 23 show clearly?

While it is not necessary to suppose that during His state of humiliation Christ was conscious of all truth at every moment of time, it is essential to hold to the conviction that every given pronouncement of our Lord is free from the contamination of error, unless we are to undermine completely the confidence in Christ as a reliable teacher of doctrine. If Christ is not to be trusted completely in all His assertions, how is the reader of His sayings to know where to draw the line between matters of eternal import and those of purely parochial matter? Appropriately this discussion can be concluded with the penetrating question of Jesus, "If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things?" (John 3:12).

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Hymnal (Continued from Page 9)

Unfortunately, not many of the "new" hymns are up to this standard.

VII. Psychology in Hymnal Preparation

When most people look at a hymnal, they check to see if their old favorites are in it. Thus a new hymnal which has eliminated 455 hymns is bound to be in trouble from the start, even if the content of all of the new hymns are superior to the old ones. However, when the reverse is true, there isn't a chance that they will accept it!

VIII. A Solution to the Problem

The basic problem lies in the rationale in the preparation of the hymnal: that is, to increase the size of the liturgical section and to decrease the size of the hymn section. Limiting the size of the hymnbook to 400 hymns when attempting to replace a hymnal of 660 hymns is not only a difficult task, it is an unnecessary one! We do not need four musical settings to one set of words. They realize they are singing the same words every Sunday and don't particularly appreciate being human prayer wheels. It would have been far better to have one setting to four sets of words! (not that I'm suggesting this). Also the Office of Compline will not be used sufficiently to warrant its inclusion. By reducing the size of the liturgical section, it will be possible to include more hymns.

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LC-MS Mortgage Rebirthright

The author presented this document at the annual April meeting of the National Association of Church and Institutional Financing Organizations, Washington, D.C., of which he is member of the Board of Governors. He is a specialist in church financing. A more detailed statement of this problem, significant to congregations facing it, can be obtained from AFFIRM. A self-addressed stamped envelope would be appreciated.

IN the past 14 years of my church loan involvement and mortgaging of approximately 150 Lutheran church and institutional properties among others, certain patterns and practices have become almost as routine as three meals a day and sleep at night. Certain heritage practices and second-generation privileges as well as pitfalls also surface as the future ability of a borrowing corporation to repay a given debt about to be incurred is considered by financiers of varied resources. There are differences in practice between Lutheran corporations of the American Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church in America, the Wisconsin Synod Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, all of whom underscore the need for a spiritual rebirth of the individual upon entry into a respective membership. The latter group of the four represents the second largest group numerically but the uppermost in per member contributions through the years. They prominently share the national religious spotlight currently due to a major controversy on the quality of their members doctrinal stance and/or aspirations.

Sufficient inquiries by individuals and congregations of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod should justify some concentrated effort and thinking on the part of individual congregations and their trustees responsible for their administrative leadership. An acquaintance of mine asked the other day "what happens to our Church Extension fund loan if our congregation determines to separate from the Synod?" The answer to that specific question is easy since all Church Extension Fund Loan Contracts to which I have ever been exposed call for *immediate refinancing of the obligation without exception*. If such a congregation were to be 100 per cent for such a secession, which they must be to retain the assets, that alternative doesn't sound like it provides much of an obstacle under normal (prior to 1970) mortgage loan conditions and money availabilities. However, we are living in probably the most discriminating lending market environment of all times, excepting the depression period of the 30's, of course, and with few exceptions in today's loan market, church loans are almost impossible to negotiate even at premium rates of interest attainable by better-than-average congregation budgets.

TWO major obstacles are almost sure to raise their formidable, if not ugly, heads. The first being a required equity position (usually 40 per cent or better) of a borrowing congregation who probably would never have gotten a Church Extension loan unless they had a weak equity position in the first place, and, secondly, few if any lenders would consider making a new loan for refinancing to a congregation severing its existing connections as a dissident in order to align itself with a new corporate affiliation having little or no track record.

To the average John Q. Lutheran or any bystander this may all sound like so much Philadelphia lawyers gobbledygook because most people are seldom exposed to anything other than a home loan procedure which they, and thousands of neighbors like themselves, have been amortizing over the past ten or fifteen years in an escalating economy which has made their experience a comparatively painless one. But adequate church loan sources in the entire United States in 1975 are probably fewer than the number of denominations themselves.

"Therefore," my friend asked, "where would our mortgaged

property go if we cannot find a refinancing loan source to satisfy the unanimous vote of the congregations involved in making such a move?" The only answer obviously becomes "to the individuals lending capacity of the membership of your congregation, if you have sufficient or to the mortgage holder with whom your property is encumbered, namely, the Church Extension Fund of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod." Oddly enough, and this may surprise everyone, most state laws concerning mortgages and also, perhaps more importantly, laws concerning contract and property rights as between members would probably recognize a minority group within the dissident congregation that remains with the parent affiliation existent at the time the mortgage was put in force even though an unquestionable majority of a voter's body may resolve to sever its relationship with the affiliated headquarter's body. There are numerous cases on record where precisely this judgment was made by the court, delivering all such real assets in question to the very small minority of members not separating from its parent affiliate body. A church corporation confronted with this decision should have its attorney research the references given at the end of this treatise before acting hastily.

FREQUENTLY, since a church congregation of the form of government employed by most Lutheran bodies is autonomous, its members assume that the majority of its membership "calls the shots." But these same congregations differ from the usual congregational form of government by having vested in their Synod the supervision of the doctrines preached and taught in their churches and schools. They are thereby a federation of independent congregations who have committed to the Synod complete authority over doctrine and practice (*Constitution*, Article II, Article VI). It is therefore recognized that a majority of a congregation cannot, against the protest of a minority, divert or change the use of its properties to serve the alterations of a denomination or a doctrine.

It therefore follows that the property, both real and personal, of a member congregation in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, is held and controlled in trust by its officers, to be used only in the preaching and teaching of that which is in accord with the doctrines and practices of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and any who depart therefrom, be he pastor, teacher or a majority faction, loses the right to control and use the property of the congregation.

Obviously, each state and their judicial authority (Supreme Court) would probably reflect some variance in their handling of such unique matters but any congregation contemplating legal separation of any kind from its parent mooring should carefully weigh the potential future ownership of their capital assets before boldly venturing out "in strange waters." The sheep who look to the shepherd and the shepherd's assistants for material as well as spiritual protection have a right to expect and get knowledgeable guidance with a minimum of guessing as to the probable outcome of some venturesome speculation.

The mere word *security* is to assure the lender or lenders to a congregation the freedom from danger or risk as well as freedom from apprehension, whether such lenders be Lutheran or not. Therefore, both pastoral and congregation leadership have no alternative but to insure its members and their benefactors that their trust and confidence is backed up with competence, dedication, discipline and knowledge.

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On the News Front

THE upbeat news, among other signs that the heart of Missouri is still strong and functioning, contains information that the church recently placed into full-time church positions a total of 457 new pastors, teachers, deaconesses, parish workers, and lay assistants. Although some hundreds of teachers were not placed at the time that the Board of Assignments met, an analysis of the many factors involved in this situation (including the fact that many schools are still trying to call from the field rather than to accept recent graduates) led to the belief that most will be placed by June and, probably, all by fall.

THE upbeat news also includes the election of Dr. Ralph A. Bohlmann as the seventh president of the 136 year old St. Louis Seminary. Unanimously elected by the four electors designated by Synod, Dr. Bohlmann, acting president of the school since May 20, 1974, has already written an enviable record: the school's enrollment has doubled to 200 students, the faculty has also doubled in size, and all academic programs have been significantly strengthened. Dr. Bohlmann's educational background includes graduation from the Sem he now heads, studies at Heidelberg on a Fulbright, studies at Marquette in Milwaukee, and a Yale Ph. D. in 1968. Not only does he have parish experience, but he has also served three of Synod's educational schools. *Affirm* looks forward to years of dynamic leadership under Dr. Bohlmann's presidency and wishes him God's richest blessing in his new and highly significant post!

AFTER permitting both President Preus and John Tietjen, now president of Seminex, to express their viewpoints in the columns of *Christianity Today*, Harold Lindsell, its editor, certainly not a Missourian, analyzed both statements and Missouri's problem at some length. *Affirm* excerpts three paragraphs from his article,

From its beginnings the Missouri Synod had stood resolutely for an inerrant Scripture. Preus and those who stand with him think that this is the crucial issue. The faculty of Concordia Seminary in Springfield, Illinois, also consider this the crucial question, especially in regard to that seminary's more prestigious sister seminary, Concordia in St. Louis. Moreover, some members of the St. Louis seminary faculty also thought that biblical inerrancy was the key question. But Tietjen and others maintain that "interpreting the Bible is an issue," not biblical inerrancy. The relation between interpretations can in effect deny inerrancy.

I cannot but conclude that the interpretation of Scripture in many instances is dynamically related to the doctrine of biblical inerrancy so that they cannot be kept apart. And I disagree with Tietjen: I think that the Missouri controversy is a dispute between "Bible believers" and "Bible doubters." It seems inescapable to me that the question of biblical inerrancy lies at its heart. Other denominations resolved the problem by deciding that inerrancy was untenable; people were free to accept or reject statements in Scripture as they saw fit. Up to now the result of this has been that sooner or later such denominations permit persons to remain in good standing while denying cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith.

We now have before us the case of the Missouri Synod. Which way will it go? Will it continue to uphold its traditional commitment to an inerrant Scripture, or will it become a "broadening church" like others before it? Only time will tell.

MISSOURI'S Department of Public Relations carried a long statement of Dr. A. Lorenz Grumm at the time of his resignation as stewardship counselor of Missouri in protest of administration policies. Like others before him, he states that "the administration . . . in my judgment is utterly incapable of leading our synod forward into vital mission and ministry in the foreseeable future . . . In my opinion they (the members of the present administration) have become so completely tied to and supportive of the militant and partisan *Affirm* . . . that they are no longer in a position to lead the entire Synod with honesty and integrity." Speaking for itself (and not the other group Grumm also identifies), *Affirm* restates its position: it has never wanted anything other than faithfulness to the Word, the Confessions, and the great heritage of our Lutheran Church. Its only partisanship is to that cause; if it is militant, it is so because a confessional church like Missouri can remain confessional only by firmly adhering to the truth of God's inspired Word.

(Continued on Next Page)

On The News Front: (Continued from Previous Page)

SOMEONE listed all the attempts at reconciliation which have been made over the years. This impressive list speaks for itself.

1. The Council of Presidents together with the faculties of the two seminaries have met regularly since 1961. This also included the synodical president and vice-presidents. These meetings involved doctrinal discussion.
2. Twice annually the faculties of the two seminaries have met. These also involved doctrinal discussions.
3. Since the 1950's the Board of Control met with individuals when there were complaints.
4. Every year the President of the Synod met with the St. Louis seminary faculty.
5. The Commission on Theology and Church Relations was established for this purpose, to discuss theology. Laymen are involved as members of this commission.
6. Since 1939 every synodical convention has dealt with doctrinal problems. Laymen, of course, are involved in these conventions.
7. The President of Synod reacted to regular complaints against the St. Louis faculty.
8. The Seminary faculty regularly held inter-departmental meetings until they were cancelled by Dr. Tietjen.
9. There were eleven meetings between the faculty majority and the faculty minority.
10. There were at least 12 meetings during the Tietjen presidency after the Fact Finding Committee had reported. This involved people from both sides of the questions.
11. A variety of materials have been sent which were made available to the church and which pastors were urged to make available to their congregations:
 - a. Documents developed by the CTCR:
 - Inspiration and Revelation
 - What is a Doctrine?
 - Lutheran Stance on Contemporary Biblical Interpretation
 - Gospel and Scripture
 - A Comparative Study of Contemporary Approaches to Biblical Interpretation
 - Guidelines on Dissent
 - Report on Dissent on A Statement
 - Lutheran Stance Toward Ecumenism
 - The Document on Fellowship
 - A new document which will soon be sent out: The Inspiration of Scripture: Its Meaning and Implications
 - b. Faithful to Our Calling: Faithful to our Lord Parts I and II
 - c. The Blue Book of The Fact Finding Committee
 - d. Fact Finding or Fault Finding?
 - e. Response by the St. Louis Faculty to Resolution 3-09
 - f. Brother to Brother Letters sent out by the Synodical President, giving reports to the pastors for their parish. These included doctrinal concerns.
12. Committee 3 before and during the New Orleans Convention spent 26 days on this very problem. The majority on this committee were laymen.
13. The Board of Directors held 30 forum meetings.
14. The so-called 5 and 5 Committee—representatives of ELIM and the Board of Directors.
15. The Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Conciliation (14 members) held meetings for the past 15 months—monthly meetings of two days each. The purpose was to determine and define the issues.
16. The Committee of 20—representatives of the Concordia Seminary faculty and students, the Seminex faculty and students, the Board of Directors, the Commission on Constitutional Matters, the Board for Higher Education and the President of Synod. This group also included laymen.
17. Numerous private meetings involving the President of Synod or the Vice-Presidents with persons against whom there were complaints.
18. Hundreds of hours and a variety of attempts were made to get Seminex students to be properly certified for the ministry.
19. There were CTCR Conferences throughout all of the Districts of the Synod in North America from the fall of 1972 thru June of 1973.
20. Finally, the recent theological convocation has devoted approximately 12,000 collective man-hours discussing the doctrinal issues facing our Synod.

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On The News Front: (Continued from Previous Page)

IN a further comment on *Affirm's* role, in this time of Missouri's difficulties and the role that thousands of others have played, a quotation from *Lutherans Alert—National* seems most appropriate. *Lutherans Alert* is the ALC counterpart of those publications and workers in Missouri who defend the inerrancy of the Bible against the capitulation of the ALC and LCA to the Historical-Critical Method of interpretation. The current issue contains these observations on the *President's Page*, written by Dr. R. H. Redal of Tacoma,

If there were no such organization as LUTHERANS ALERT—National there would not be one single voice within the ALC protesting what is happening to the Bible. We praise God for the many voices that the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has in upholding the infallibility of Holy Scripture. Even though our ALC leadership upholds those Lutherans in the Missouri Synod who allow for errors in the Bible, we in LUTHERANS ALERT—National want it known to the whole church that we stand with those in the Missouri Synod who want to preserve the historic faith of their church.

It is, also, appalling to this writer that those who believe in the doctrine of inerrancy within the ALC do not become more vocal and enter into the same kind of a dispute with its leadership as is occurring in the LC-MS. All of Lutheranism ought to be involved in this raging controversy. This is no synodical dispute. This is the actual battle for the survival of Christianity. True Christians had better start defending their faith, or the devil is going to take it away from them. This is no day for Christians to sit back in comfortable chairs and yawn in the face of the dispute that is raging over the church which at this very moment is threatening to engulf it. What we definitely need is a grass roots awakening. Every Christian in the Lutheran Church, no matter of what synod, ought to begin to ask questions of its leadership: "Where do you stand in relationship to Holy Scripture?" "Do you believe that the Bible is the Word of God without error in all that it speaks?" "Do you tolerate and teach any other view than that the Bible is totally the Word of God?"

SOMEONE was good enough to send along a copy of the current issue of *The Foundation for Economic Education* (FEE), a group interested in economic matters. Its lead paragraph is worth quoting because it holds just as much meaning, if not more, for religious matters as for material concerns,

RIGHT NOW!

By the streets of "by and by" one
arrives at the house of "never."

—Cervantes

By "right now" I mean today; I mean, stand for and proclaim the right as one sees it, not by and by, not tomorrow, but *now*! Truth deferred is truth interred—laid to rest. It has been suggested that he who postpones the honesty of today till tomorrow will probably relegate his tomorrow to eternity. Righteousness can never be born in procrastination but only in the here and now—right now!

WHERE is Seminex heading? Perhaps a small clue lies in the fact that on the Friday of Easter, it conducted a service at Concordia Lutheran Church, Kirkwood, Missouri in which Ms Jan Otte, "a Seminarian" served as one of the "assisting clergy." During the service she read the first lesson, bided the prayers, and distributed the chalice on the epistle side of the church.

IF you have not yet been aware of it, you should know that Missouri's Commission on Theology and Church Relations recently published an excellent pamphlet, *A Lutheran Stance Toward Ecumenicism*, available from Concordia Publishing House. This pamphlet explores what the Bible says on this point, examines the Confessions, and suggests ways in which, on various levels, discussions with other bodies can be held—in keeping with the principles laid down in God's Word. You will want to examine this pamphlet yourself.

(Continued on Next Page)

On The News Front: (Continued from Previous Page)

THE ST. LOUIS LUTHERAN recently carried a story about the placement of the 90 Seminex students eligible this year for placement in the church as vicars or interns. It is interesting that only 55 were assigned to Missouri congregations; 35 will vicar in the ALC and the LCA. Rev. Paul Lessmann in his comments felt that this placement was "God's way of forging relationships which should have existed years ago." This would seem a new approach to church unity: the placement of vicars by a Seminary unaffiliated with any church body.

THE Council of Presidents at a recent meeting passed a statement on the ordination of Seminex students with 28 voting for it, four against it, and five abstaining. The statement read in part,

Some of us in the Council of Presidents have been charged with improperly authorizing or participating in ordinations, commissionings, and inductions, which in the judgment of many have been out of order and in violation of the Constitution and Bylaws of our church body. We do not question each other's sincerity, motivation, or conscience scruples, but recognize the growing unrest and disturbance that these decisions have caused and are causing the church. We are sincerely sorry for the part we have played in this unrest, and beg forgiveness.

We solemnly assure the church that we shall abide by the decisions of the convention on these matters and that we shall perform our duties in accord with our oath of office.

Scriptures (Continued from Page 3)

grounds that "important considerations" like these should be viewed as something that "supersedes rules and regulations and by-laws."

When a layman asked Prof. Bouman in the plenary session what precisely he meant when he had written (and stated) that he had apparently changed his mind in recent years, or in his own words, that he felt compelled "to scuttle some previously held opinions and drastically revise others as to what is 'authentically' Lutheran and Biblical," he was *unable* to give the laymen a straightforward, unambiguous answer! Could it be that the whole matter of Genesis 3, 15 as distinctly Messianic; all the Old Testament predictive prophecies of the Savior; Moses' authorship of the Pentateuch; Isaiah's authorship of the book that bears his name; the historicity of the Jonah account; the miracles in the Old Testament and the New; the inspiration and the inerrancy of the Bible in all its parts; and so on, and on—could it be that some "scuttling" had gone on here? Prof. Bouman, it seems certain, has not himself surrendered any of these truths. The evidence grows, surely but sadly, that Seminex—and ELIM, its affiliate and supporter—is hiding its position on vital matters like these and is speaking to the people of our church *with forked tongue*.

The Church under the Scripture has the right—indeed, the sacred duty!—to call to account all its teachers who persist in advocating a minimalistic view of Scripture's inspiration, authority, and inerrancy. What's going on now in Missouri—tired though we may be of it all!—is not mere "unprofitable contentions" but "necessary controversy" in behalf of Biblical truth. (cp. *Formula of Concord*, Rule and Norm, 15) God expects his people to uphold, defend, and be obedient to His Word at every point, for the sake of the Gospel, lest the Gospel itself finally be lost.

Dr. Eugene F. Klug
Concordia Theological Seminary
Springfield, Illinois

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Symbol (Continued from Page 4)

mal thing, but more. It was agreement that all worshipped the same Lord and believed the same thing about His word. Where there is no agreement in Jesus, His person, His work, and His teaching, fellowship at the table of Jesus is impossible. All this was the position of the ancient church, even in New Testament times.

A lot of spade work must be done before warring brothers in our Synod can go to Communion with one another again. We pray that this day will come and that it will come quickly. But it is absolutely wrong to say that this unity must come on this or that day. True agreement in the faith is given by God at His pleasure and it is presumptuous to say that God must do something on a given day—although we continue to pray God for healing and reconciliation as soon as possible.

The Lutheran Reformers objected to the many abuses of the Mass which were foreign to our Lord's original institution of His Supper and even contrary to it. If we use the Lord's Supper for creating a superficial unity, a purpose not intended by Jesus, we really fall under the condemnation of our Lutheran Confessions. By doing this, we are rendering impossible the very unity for which so many of the church are rightfully working and praying.

Dr. David P. Scaer
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Editorial Policy

While the articles in *Affirm* with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

The Convocation and Other Matters

THIS issue of *Affirm* carries an analysis of some of the matters the recent Convocation touched on. You will find excellent summaries and comments on some of the issues presented on these pages. You will also find a statement, representative of the thought of some, as to why they did not attend the Communion Service held in connection with the Convocation.

Yet as one analysis *Affirm* offers points out, the Convocation had an air of unreality. Though efforts were made on various occasions to come to real grips with the matters under discussion and though Conservatives spoke clearly, the issues were often obscured in the flow of words which followed.

Most noticeably, those with Liberal tendencies seemed at times to want to give the impression that we are theologically united in the church and, had Missouri only their presentations to rely on, we might well agree that a consensus had been arrived at in Missouri and that the issues troubling us could now peacefully be laid to rest.

But what was said often contradicted what those with Liberal tendencies had said and written on many occasions in the past. They seemed to prefer silence and to temper their words, yet they did not on any occasion retract all the literature and statements which have led to this crisis in our midst.

Had they retracted their massive liberal-leaning materials, a *Te Deum* would, at the end of the Convocation, have made the walls of the Sem's chapel tremble with joy.

But what shall the Conservative believe? Shall he believe the contents of the Bretscher book reviewed on these pages? Shall he believe *Faithful to our Calling*? Shall he believe some of the essays which have appeared in the CTM? Or shall he believe the mute liberally-inclined men at the Convocation?

If the analysis on these pages of what is to happen to our hymnal is at all correct (and *Affirm* thinks it is) what will such a badly altered hymnal do to our theology in the light of a decade and more of the statements, which those with Liberal tendencies have made in our midst?

If the President of Missouri will release to the church, as Conservatives ask him to, the document prepared by the Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Conciliation, perhaps the issues will again be stated for the church as clearly and concisely as they can be.

We cannot move toward reconciliation until we know what it is we are to reconcile ourselves to.

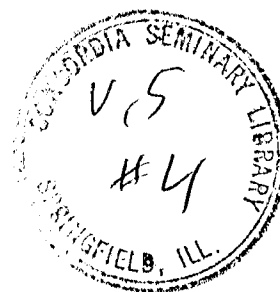
As this is written Anaheim still lies some months ahead.

Perhaps under God a way will be found to end the crisis peacefully and in keeping with the will of God—and certainly all our prayers and discussions should be directed to that end.

May God go with this issue of *Affirm* and help it serve the church in preparing itself for the long, long week of Anaheim!

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"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13

Anaheim Overview

THE *Convention Workbook* with its hundreds of resolutions on business crucial to Missouri clearly spells out how critical the Anaheim week will prove to be in our church's history.

Prominent conservatives from around the country have reached an informal consensus about the major actions the convention must take if historic Missouri and the Biblical truths it has stood for are, by grace, to be kept among us and passed on to future generations.

Five major issues and various subsidiary and related matters must be acted on in a positive and God-pleasing way.

- Seminex*. The consensus is that Seminex should be repudiated and that its graduates, if they want to enter our ministry, should follow the colloquy route found in the *Handbook*. Congregations with Seminex graduates should require their pastors to follow this procedure or become subject to suspension from Missouri by a designated date.
- ELIM*. The Michigan resolution, 3-196A, should be generally favored by Anaheim: that ELIM is divisive, that its harsh judgments be deplored, that its district officers disavow affiliation with it or disqualify themselves from office, that all members of the Michigan district refrain from disturbing the church further, and that Anaheim declare all who continue in ELIM to be ineligible for synodical office or a divine call in Missouri.
- The Assignment of Calls*. The convention should resolve that the terminal schools assign calls and that the Council of Presidents be called into session only at the discretion of the Synodical President.
- The English District*. The English District should be dissolved into the various geographic districts.
- ALC fellowship*. Fellowship with the ALC, in view of the absence of doctrinal agreement, should be terminated at the convention.

SCORES of other significant matters are up for consideration, but without doubt the items listed above will dominate the convention.

To help clarify the major issues and others, *Affirm* on these pages carries a series of articles about them. The timing of the floor committee meetings and the publication schedule of *Affirm* did not permit *Affirm* to comment on the floor committee resolutions themselves in this issue, but *Affirm's* Editorial Group believes in the soundness of the approach taken by the articles in this issue.

Walt Dissen's remarks on the *English District*, for example,

are the pithy and decisive comments of an informed lay member of that district.

Richard Kiann's *New Orleans Resolution 3-09* clearly reveals the role which this doctrinal resolution has played in our history since New Orleans and implicitly affirms that conservatives cannot yield on it. In that connection Pastor Andrew Simcak's few paragraphs, *Synod's Problem is basically Doctrinal*, add new light to what troubles Missouri.

Dr. Walter A. Maier's *The Problem of ELIM* states it concisely and well, and ends with the questions which Anaheim will have to answer on this troubling matter.

TWO articles appear on *Seminex*. Pastor E. J. Otto's article summarizes the problem and incisively analyzes the many resolutions for dealing with it which have been offered the church. John M. Drickamer's *The Danger of Independent Seminaries* traces the struggle the Presbyterians went through in a similar situation more than a generation ago and the moral which that history has for Missouri today. Mr. Drickamer is a student at our Springfield Seminary.

The Curtis Peterson material on *Selecting a Candidate for a Synodical Office*, is reasoned, sound, timely, and of immense importance in coping with the Anaheim elections.

A Responsible Mission, written by the Rev. W. J. Sohns and the Rev. Otto Hintze, strongly presents the case of the conservatives in the foreign mission controversy and is a refreshing statement of fact which should carry great weight when the mission issue and matters relating to it are brought to the convention floor.

The Baur article clarifies with great precision the limits of *Congregational Autonomy* in a church body like ours.

One issue, which has come to the fore in recent months, the question of the *Centralization of Power* in Missouri is carried on another page; any move toward such centralization could have incalculable consequences.

And finally, in addition to the News Scene, it is a pleasure and a delight to bring Missouri up-to-date with Dean John W. Klotz's *God Richly Blesses 801*. What a unified church and a unified seminary can achieve by grace is enheartening!

Missouri's conservatives have been blessed greatly in many other ways by our Lord.

The lesson of the last few years and the lesson carried on these pages is a simple one: working together under the mercy of God and doing it cheerfully and wholeheartedly, we can win the theological struggle.

Pray that we do!

Centralization of Power

HOW much of an issue the centralization of power in Missouri will become at Anaheim no one yet knows.

But it may be an issue and to understand it, you must understand the way in which Missouri is structured. The simplest approach to it is to compare Missouri with the Federal government. Our political forefathers deliberately, in order to avoid tyranny, broke up the political power they were creating into three units: the legislative—to create the laws of the United States, the executive—to carry out those laws, and the judicial—to determine that justice was done under the laws.

They deliberately drew lines, defined the parameters of each of these branches of government, and so set a firm foundation which has given us nearly two centuries of the most democratic government on the face of the world.

With all its drawbacks, the system has worked reasonably well.

The men who created Missouri Synod may have used that model, but if they did, they carried the democratization of church power a step further. They decentralized authority in Missouri to a greater degree—and the system worked remarkably well until recent years, when a threat to it was avoided.

The system, simplified, is this: the final authority on all our church business is Missouri assembled in convention. Its decisions direct each board and commission and group of Missouri in the policies it is to follow until these matters can be reconsidered at the next convention.

NO board has authority over any other board; each is autonomous within the framework allowed by the *Handbook*. The President of Missouri, for example, has no authority to tell the Board of Control of the Seminary at St. Louis what it must do. He may suggest and urge; but the Board must decide, always knowing that in two years it will have to make a public report of its stewardship.

The Board of Directors of Synod was created essentially to govern its financial matters and, in essence, except as it can limit the budget of the Board for Higher Education, which governs Synod's schools, it has no control over that Board or any other Board. The Board for Higher Education and its schools must report to synodical conventions.

Synod has carved out for the Mission Board its area of responsibility; in that area it is authorized to act according to policies determined by the bylaws and the convention; it has no other powers.

While Synod's Board of Directors essentially needs financial expertise, the President of Synod has been given authority to act on behalf of the church in matters of doctrine and practice.

All its officers and boards and commissions report at each convention on the way in which they performed their tasks.

Some perceptive observer has pointed out that it is the genius of Missouri and one of its great strengths, under God, to be so totally democratic. No Board of Directors could possibly begin to grasp or have the expertise to act adequately on the essentials of Synod's many and far-flung operations and programs.

WHAT Missouri did in creating this structure was to give great weight to the Biblical passages which state that God has given a variety of gifts, one to this person, another to a second, and so on, and that He expects the church fully to use all these special talents His people possess.

In the present crisis, despite Missouri's long and successful history with this way of governing itself, there has arisen a movement to concentrate more power in the Board of Directors.

This has given those of a more liberal persuasion an opportunity to accuse leaders of the conservative movement of making a power play and to divert attention from the fact that Missouri's struggle is essentially theological and not political.

Outside of the argument of Missouri's overwhelming success with its present form of church government, a number of other factors should be carefully considered.

The move to centralize power is, at best, a response to the crisis the church has struggled with. It is difficult in the middle of a crisis objectively to weigh the long-run effects of a major and hasty centralization.

MOREOVER, and this is of the utmost significance to the future of the church, were power concentrated in a single Board, those with liberal inclinations could find themselves in a position to capture the center of power and overnight gain control of the entire church body, which till now has seen fit to spread its authority among many responsible groups.

In addition, such a centralization of power would require a major overhauling of the constitution by which the church is governed.

And finally, the various boards of Synod which develop many programs for the Synod should be responsible to Synod itself and not to a single person or a small group of people within Synod.

Affirm hopes that Anaheim will repudiate every attempt at centralization and will reaffirm to its fullest the principle that all of Synod's program boards are responsible to the Synod itself and so sustain the basic polity under which Missouri has lived so long—between synodical meetings all boards have full autonomy.

Synod's Problem is Basically Doctrinal

WE give thanks to God that even though the recent Theological Convocation did not honestly come to grips with the doctrinal problems troubling our Synod, it did point out to our people that the problems are doctrinal in nature. How serious is the situation? How far have we deviated in teaching and publicly defending God's Word in all its truth and purity?

The Rev. James W. Mayer, Coordinator of Partners in Mission, spoke at a seminar "to edify the saints" at Resurrection Lutheran Church, Spring, Texas on May 3. (Another speaker was Dr. Oliver Harms). It was not at all edifying to hear Dr. Mayer, who had served as Secretary for South Asia since 1966 and whose appointment had not been renewed by the Board for Missions in January, 1974, state that he could not accept the statement that people who have not heard of Jesus Christ are not saved. His actual words: "The Lutherans believe in the doctrine of objective justification by faith which is the doctrine that says that the Yalle man, a tribe in Nigeria who has not heard of Christ, goes to hell. I refuse to make that statement."

The members of our Synod need to realize that our differences are basically doctrinal.

The Rev. Andrew Simcak, Jr.
St. Timothy Lutheran Church
Houston, Texas

Anaheim Faces the Seminex Issue

THE name "Seminex" is new to us since 1974, but its roots go back 20 years when some of our professors accepted a German method of Biblical interpretation (Historical-Critical) which assumes that the Bible is to be treated as any other historical document. It assumes that both the early Christian church and the sacred writers altered the record of the events in Jesus' ministry, thus making it virtually impossible to know what Jesus really did and what He said.

More an attitude than a method, it makes a man (the interpreter) the judge of what are facts in the Bible and what are not. Instead of a humility which stands before God's Word in obedience, its hallmark is pride which manipulates that Word.

Synod at New Orleans drew the line on 20 years of this when it condemned the doctrinal position of the St. Louis Seminary faculty majority and in other major decisions directed the Board of Control to investigate both the faculty and the president of the school. Five months later, the temporary suspension of the president in January of 1974 resulted in a well-planned walk-out by a majority of professors and students, followed by the ultimatum that there would be no return to the classrooms unless the president were reinstated. The Board of Control, mindful of its responsibility to the Synod which elects it, had no choice but to find the faculty in breach of contract. The walk-off students and faculty set up shop elsewhere in St. Louis. Thus Seminex was born.

SEMINEX has graduated two classes. Even though these men are not certified for pastorates in the Missouri Synod, eight District presidents were willing to break both their oath of office and the synodical regulations in authorizing the ordination of some of them. A number of congregations violated our mutually accepted procedures by accepting them. Some Seminex vicars are serving their internship year in ALC and LCA churches and are thus outside the supervision of Missouri Synod pastors. The majority of the Seminex professors hold to the doctrinal position condemned by Synod in New Orleans resolution 3-09.

Seminex is not under Synod's supervision. Its Board of Directors is not elected by Synod and is not responsible to Synod. Its students do not study under a synodically approved curriculum. Its graduates cannot properly serve Missouri Synod parishes.

Lawlessness, we have seen again, breeds chaos. At Anaheim, Synod must set its house in order and deal with the vexing problem of Seminex. Recognition of this fact is apparent in approximately 150 proposed resolutions in the convention workbook found under three sections: Theology and Church Relations (3-45ff.), Constitutional Matters (5-97 ff.), and Higher Education (6-33 ff.).

The suggested solutions, as one would expect, cover a wide spectrum. Liberals want Synod to accept Seminex as a third synodical seminary with its faculty approved and its graduates certified. Anaheim will see well-organized efforts in that direction. But to legitimize Seminex would condone rebellion, approve deliberate violations of Synod's self-adopted procedure, accept a double standard of theology, and place into the Missouri Synod pulpits two kinds of pastors with clashing views of the Bible. One finds it hard to believe that Synod would thus sound its own death knell.

WHAT other options are suggested? First, there is a group of fairly mild overtures, which simply reaffirm the present (by-law 4.15) certification process by the faculties of our two seminaries and caution against any additions to that process via some sort of super-board. Others ask, request, implore, en-

courage, admonish or advise Seminex to close its doors. These suggested resolutions say nothing regarding what is to be done if Seminex does not comply. No additional requests or directives that Seminex "abide by" synodical regulations are needed, nor would they be heeded. Seminex has not done so. It has given no indication of any change of heart.

A second group speaks more strongly. Repeating the request that Seminex cease its activities, they provide—if the call to repentance goes unheeded—that Seminex be "dealt with" by the synodical president, the Council of Presidents, the Board for Higher Education, and others. In most cases, however, the directive is vague and would therefore make implementation difficult if not impossible.

A third group of overtures provides specific courses of action, if Seminex fails to respond to Synod's plea for a change in doctrinal stance, repentance, a return to the synodical doctrinal position, and self-closure. One overture calls for the removal from Synod of all Seminex personnel on the basis of Romans 16:17 and Article XIII of Synod's constitution. In that event Synod would need to state clearly that Seminex affiliation constituted what Article XIII calls "persistent offensive conduct."

ANOTHER proposed resolution suggests simply that if after admonition Seminex continues to defy Synod, those connected with Seminex shall be declared to have "severed their connection with Synod." Some overtures want Synod's president to be instructed to begin disciplinary action against Seminex, the congregations who have violated bylaw 4.01 by accepting uncertified men, and District presidents who have authorized the ordination of such men. Again, some overtures in this area fail to specify what the "disciplinary action" shall include, especially in the case of Seminex and the District presidents.

Within the three broad areas mentioned, there are a multitude of variations and combination of suggested actions.

At this writing, the 14 floor committees have not met. On them rests the awesome task of studying all the overtures which fall in their respective areas and formulating resolutions for presentation to the convention. Those pertaining to Seminex will come from committees 3, 5, and 6. The floor committees want and need our prayers. It is our understanding that once the floor committees have completed their work, the resolutions for consideration at Anaheim will be mailed to all delegates. It behooves all of them to study hard and pray much. The Lord's promise is sure, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Quincy, Illinois

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Re Congregational Autonomy

THERE appears to be quite an argument over the meaning of the word "ungeeignet" which appears in the old constitution of Synod where autonomy is guaranteed to all member churches of the Synod. To us the word says that synodical resolutions need not be implemented if they are judged to be inexpedient or unsuited for local conditions. Others may be able to think of better shadings but they are of no special consequence insofar as the question of local autonomy is concerned. It appears to us that a debate on a definition of the word merely diverts attention from the real issue.

The peculiar idea of the liberals is that congregations have *absolute* autonomy, namely, the right to do as they please, not only in purely secular but also in matters pertaining to doctrine and Scriptural practice.

Actually the translation, as found presently in the constitution is not only good but readily understandable.

What the liberals do not care to admit is that member congregations have never had more than *limited* autonomy, limited by the fact that they voluntarily belong to a Synod which has a constitution which binds them to a specific confession. What is more, they are also bound in like manner by their own congregational constitution which ties them to the Scriptures and to the Lutheran Confessions.

THAT means that all of the loose talk about absolute freedom and the corollary talk about synodical legalism is pure nonsense. The incontrovertible fact is that every member of a synodical congregation and every member of Synod—congregations, pastors, parish teachers—have *themselves* limited their freedom of action by voluntarily joining a congregation and the Synod which have definite constitutional confessions.

To talk of Synod as a taskmaster is either inexcusable ignorance or a vicious design to deceive the unwary, especially since Synod is no more than an aggregation of like-minded congregations, pastors, and parish teachers who have banded together to pursue a common purpose. So who has bound them and who has supplied the tie that binds without which they could not cooperate or even exist as a purposeful body? *Isn't it they themselves?*

Unlimited autonomy exists only in congregations which are independent on the one hand, and on the other hand have no constitution which ties members to a specific confession.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and every congregation in it does have a distinct constitutional confession. Moreover, all servants bind themselves to abide by them. Beyond that congregations are fully autonomous and it is strange that learned and highly trained men appear to be confused. It is equally strange that such men are attempting to foist odd definitions on old and never misunderstood expressions which clearly have meant only one thing for more than a century and a quarter.

It is axiomatic that no matter how one tries to interpret things, the hard fact is that bylaws, even constitutional provisions, must not infringe upon a constitutional confession which takes priority over everything else. All else is secondary and must be interpreted in the light of an accepted doctrinal position. Therein lies the only curtailment of a congregation's full autonomy.

It is as simple as that.

Dr. John C. Baur
Villa Ridge, Missouri

New Orleans Resolution 3-09

IN July 1973 the former faculty majority of Concordia Seminary organized a public protest against this resolution.

It has been attacked incessantly to this day by all "dissenters" within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod because they recognize it as a major road block barring the triumph of false teaching.

The former faculty majority walked out on their obligations to Synod in February 1974. No one was expelled. They wanted all rights, privileges, and benefits of synodical membership, but none of its discipline and obligations.

To justify the ethical structure of their revolt against Synod, they and their supporters in ELIM have falsely claimed that Resolution 3-09 is contrary to Article II of the constitution of Synod. It is not. Let's look at the record.

1) The New Orleans Convention *Proceedings* exhibit Res. 3-09 on pp. 133-139. The introduction to the resolution points to doctrinal unity as the chief practical and spiritual objective of all confession.

2) Article II of the constitution spells out the basis of our confessional unity.

3) The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod was organized on this basis in 1847. No dissenting congregation or pastor signed the constitution.

4) Because of the established confessional unanimity of the signers of the constitution, they could also agree that "All matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided by the Word of God." (Article VIII, c)

5) Agreement or unanimity of confession regarding the Word of God is the essential requirement if the Word of God is to function as the basis for decision for all Christian teaching in the Church.

6) Res. 3-09 (*Proceedings*, p. 134, Col. 2) points to six aberrations in the confession and teaching on the part of the former majority of the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and explains the implications of these aberrations in the *Preamble* to the resolution. (*Proceedings* p. 135, col. 2 - p. 138)

7) Corruption of Biblical teachings regarding the Word of God must be rejected by those members of the Synod who faithfully support the teaching of the Synod regarding the Word of God since its beginnings.

8) No informed member of the Synod can endorse the doctrinal aberrations of former faculty members. Those who support the former faculty majority or ELIM do so either out of uninformed sentimentality or because they share the same doctrinal aberrations.

9) New Orleans Res. 3-09 is a major theological and ethical landmark in the history of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. It ought to be celebrated as such.

10) On February 8-9, 1974 the Synodical Commission on Constitutional Matters ruled affirmatively on the validity of Res. 3-09.

11) To reject Res. 3-09 will require that the majority of the delegates at the Anaheim Convention share the doctrinal aberrations with which the former faculty majority was charged.

Dr. H. Richard Klann
Concordia Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

On Politicking and Selecting a Candidate for a Synodical Office

One issue that continually comes to the fore at Synodical and District conventions is what to do with the various "lists" of "approved candidates" or the suggestions for preferred candidates for various elective offices that are circulated either openly or under the table. Much has been said and written about "politicking" at District and Synodical conventions, and much of this is confusing more than it clarifies the issue. On this score the Anaheim Convention promises to be no different.

HOW does one select a candidate for office, anyway? Each delegate is given a list of dozens of nominees, very few of which are known by him personally. What is the criteria for selecting one candidate over another?

Let's take a hypothetical example of two fictitious candidates nominated for the same position on a given synodical board.

John A., 52, has been chairman of his congregation for 6 years, an elder for 10 years and was superintendent of the Sunday school for 5 years. He has served on his District Board for Missions for the past 6 years. He is a regional sales manager for a shoe manufacturer.

Richard B., a 38 year old attorney, has been president of his congregation for 3 years, was secretary for 2 and served as chairman of the Evangelism Committee for 4 years previous to that. He has served his district as a member of the Board of Appeals for 3 years.

Which one would you vote for? Both seem to be technically qualified for the Board for which they were nominated. Both are sincere Christians. Both are successful in their chosen area of business and both are very active in their church on congregational and District levels. Both must be expected to have the identical theological or doctrinal stance. Do they? That is a question every delegate must ask and find the answer.

MOST delegates would say: You haven't given me enough information! How do the nominees stand on the issues of the day? How would you find out the theological stance of a candidate for a church office? Wouldn't you want to ask questions of these men on the issues facing our Synod? What is their attitude toward ELIM, Seminex, ALC fellowship, the Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles? Is one more liberal than the other? These are the kinds of questions you would want answered before making up your mind for whom you would vote.

Special evaluations and candidates (or even "lists," if you will) of both moderates and conservatives help at this point. Moderates have compiled them because they indicate who could back ELIM, Seminex, and generally more liberal theology. Conservatives have compiled them with a concern for following a Scriptural direction in the Synod. Synod conservatives will be backing a group of candidates because of their loyalty to the traditional theology of Synod and because they oppose the theology of the ELIM-ite party in our Synod. Where all nominees are conservative—where there is more than one conservative from which to choose, a choice is made *only* to offset the liberal

attempt at floor nominations and providing the votes in a way that a liberal could win. Those who hold a view contrary to the Synod will be interested in the recommendations or lists circulated by supporters of ELIM. (And don't be taken in by pious protests by one side or the other, for both sides have their recommendations or lists . . . Thus check around, and you will soon find this out.)

We urge the delegates to examine these lists carefully, not to follow a "party line" but because these lists represent the earnest efforts of concerned men of both sides to insure the election of qualified people who will support the position that will either continue or reverse the position of the Synod and the decisions of the New Orleans Convention. A responsible churchman can do no less!

Such lists and endorsements recognize the fact that there are at least two theological camps and positions in our Synod. It would be sheer irresponsibility to ignore this fact in our voting and in entrusting men and women to positions of responsibility for guiding the destinies of our institutions of higher education, our boards and of the Synod itself!

The Rev. Curtis A. Peterson, Pastor
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Rock Falls, Illinois

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Congregations and other groups may order copies of *Affirm* at the bulk rate of \$4.00 per hundred. This price includes postage and handling. Single copies are 10 cents each.

Correction

In the May issue of *Affirm*, there was an error. The author of the article "The New Hymnal and Service Book—An Evaluation" should have been identified as follows:

Dr. Harold Schnaible
Oakmont, Pennsylvania

Dr. Schnaible has a Ph.D. degree from Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind. We regret the misinformation.

God Richly Blesses 801

THIS has been a year of hard work for those of us called to Concordia Seminary, but also a year of great blessing. By bringing us low the Lord made clear to us that what was accomplished was His doing. Just as Gideon's three hundred could not have been successful without the Lord's help, so the rebuilding of Concordia Seminary could not have gone on without the Lord's help and blessing.

How far have we come? As we look back, we can only say "A great distance indeed." A seminary is more than buildings: it's people—students and faculty and staff—and we've been blessed with a dedicated faculty and staff and a consecrated student body that work together as a team. We have set up a number of criteria for the men whom we have called to the faculty of Concordia Seminary. First and foremost we have looked for men who are loyal to the Scriptures, who accept the holy writings as God's inspired and inerrant Word, and to the Lutheran Confessions, who accept these *because* they are in harmony in all their parts with the Holy Scriptures.

Then we look for men who have had experience in the parish ministry; who have advanced academic training, preferably an earned doctorate; and who have had prior teaching experience.

We believe the primary role of Concordia Seminary is to train men for the parish ministry. To be sure we recognize that some must be encouraged to go on for advanced study so that one day they may fill our shoes, but we believe our first and most important role is to prepare men for the parishes of our church. Of the 18 men we have added to our full time faculty, ten came directly from the parish ministry, and one man left the parish ministry a year ago to carry on graduate studies. Only one man on the teaching faculty has not had extensive experience in the parish ministry.

OUR faculty is well trained academically. Over 68 percent (15) of the 22 full time members hold earned doctorates. Several faculty members who do not hold earned doctorates do not teach—the librarian, the director of physical education, the dean of student affairs—or teach a reduced load because of administrative responsibilities, so that over 80 percent of the actual classroom teaching next year will be done by men with earned doctorates.

Our faculty has also had extensive prior teaching experience. Over 70 percent (16) of the 22 full time faculty members taught prior to September 1974. We have made every effort to assist faculty members who are teaching for the first time. Teaching techniques received considerable attention in the pre-school faculty retreat of August, 1974. Each new faculty member was also given a paperback book on teaching tips. The undersigned as dean of academic affairs regularly visits all classes and then meets with each instructor. The Board of Control has asked each faculty member to distribute an "Instructor Rating Sheet" to the students in each of the classes: in this way students grade their teachers. Faculty members discuss these student evaluations with the dean of academic affairs. These techniques have helped the beginning teachers that we have added to our faculty.

When we consider the criteria we set and how well we have been able to meet them we marvel at how the Lord has prepared the men whom we have called to Concordia Seminary. Long before the present crisis came He had picked out the men whom He had chosen for faculty responsibilities here and had prepared them for the work He intended them to do.

WE'RE also very pleased with the type of students the Lord has sent us. Of those students who graduated from Concordia Senior College in 1974 with distinction or high distinction and who continued their seminary training, the largest number enrolled at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. We're also pleased with the calibre of our non-synodical transfers.

Our student body continues to grow. The numbers climbed at the beginning of each quarter this year, and we expect 50 more students in 1975-76 than we had at the end of this year.

The faculty is committed to the concept that training on this level is a cooperative endeavor. Students feel free to sit down with faculty and administration to present their suggestions for improvement, and they are welcomed. Students serve on the two major faculty committees, the Academic Policies committee and the Seminary Life committee. The relationship which has developed between faculty and students has been a source of much satisfaction and blessing. Students recognize that the ultimate responsibility for decisions rests with the faculty, the administration and the Board of Control, but they also know that those who are responsible are anxious to listen to them.

Have we changed the program of studies? Yes, some changes have been made and we shall probably make some others in the near future. We've added as a requirement a course in evangelism. We think that every student preparing for the pastoral ministry in the LC-MS should learn some of the techniques associated with witnessing to our Lord Jesus Christ. We've introduced as a requirement the course "You and Your Synod" in which we bring to the campus synodical officials and executive secretaries to tell something about their work. We think it's important that students know something about the organization and polity of the church in which they are going to work.

SOME courses have been dropped. We no longer offer such courses as "Studies in the Pentateuch: Yahwist Stratum" because we don't think they are appropriate for a seminary such as ours. We've dropped such courses as "Theology and the Cinema" and "World Hunger" because we didn't think the material covered should be handled in a formal seminary course.

It isn't that we're uninterested in or callous to such problems as world hunger: we arranged for a number of presentations by experts on the subject in the fall quarter. A series of lectures extending over several weeks featured an agriculturalist, an economist, a geographer, and the chairman of the synodical Board of World Relief. Moreover two of our faculty members attended a recent conference on world hunger sponsored by the Synod's Commission on World Hunger, and our students will no doubt benefit from their observations and insights.

What we have tried to do is to provide our students with a broad cocurricular program to supplement classroom experiences. Most of these cocurricular presentations were made possible through a generous grant from the Aid Association for Lutherans. The general theme of one series of presentations was "Focus on the Seventies." In the fall the problem of world hunger received attention. In the winter the presentations focused on Latin America. In this series we attempted to lead our students to appreciate Latin America history and culture and to sensitize them to the mission challenges confronting our church south of the border and among the hispanic-Americans within our own borders.

(Continued on Page 7)

The English District Issue

"TO be or not to be: that is the question." This is an apt question to ask with regard to my District—the English District—in this era of inflation and an expanding world population. Consider for a moment the area covered by a D-I-S-T-R-I-C-T, not a Synod, spanning the continent with congregations in New York and California or in Arizona and Minnesota to cite only four states. Again, consider a District with *five* vice presidents (the same number as our Synod has) located in California, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Pennsylvania with its president and staff in Michigan. Small wonder then that in recent years, and again this year, Synodical Conventions have been asked to merge my District into the Synod's geographic districts!

"To everything, there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the sun." I suggest that this is true for my District too and that having served its earlier purpose because of language differences (English vs. German) over a century ago, which no longer exist, it should willingly and joyously merge into the geographic districts of the Synod. Merger is desirable for at least four reasons: (1) organizational unity; (2) God-pleasing stewardship of money, time and talent; (3) the universal usage of the English language in America; and (4) the proper doctrinal supervision so essential to a confessional church.

We have often heard that "synod" literally means "walking together." This implies unity. Unity is hardly achieved with a far-flung organization existing within an organization—perhaps with only several English District congregations in a large state where the geographic district has many congregations. In such cases the Synod is likely to achieve greater unity with more congregations in the geographic district and with comprehensive, unified regional planning and action. The same would be true if there are numerous English District congregations within the geographical district. Furthermore, why for example, should the Michigan District be discriminated against by preventing it from establishing and maintaining congregations in other states while the English District may organize and maintain congregations not only in Michigan but in other states? It is apparent that the current operations of my District do not foster unity or walking together but do promote continued unjust discrimination.

IN this era of galloping inflation the proportion of Christians in the world to heathen is decreasing while our mission program has been curtailed by financial problems. Yet we conspicuously waste the church's money, talents and time by over-lapping, redundant organization. Biennial convention travel costs for the English District alone covering an area literally from border to border and coast to coast, are appalling. Add to this the day-to-day administrative travel and communication costs plus the consumption of time and the prodigal waste starkly stands out. It is probable that nearly the entire administrative costs of operating my district could be saved by merging the District into the geographic districts yet this still has not been done. Sinful pride in the very name "English District" (and at District conventions I have heard pastors with great emotion fervently oppose even a change in name of the District let alone commit the unpardonable sin of merging the District into geographic districts) and lust for power certainly seem to be significant factors in this matter. It is sheer hypocrisy for a pastor to preach "good stewardship" to a congregation while at the same time supporting such waste.

Last but not least is the proper doctrinal supervision necessary to our confessional church. Consider for example the English District Resolution 9-11 of 1974 declaring "A Statement" to be inadequate and divisive as an expression of our witness to our common faith, or English District Resolution 9-18 resolving "... that the English District register dissent from the New Orleans convention resolution 2-12, 3-01 and 3-09 and publicly declare them to be null and void." In Resolution 9-16 the English District voted to "... reject the Synod administration's unwarranted condemnation of ELIM..." and to "... encourage active support of this vitally needed organization." Need more be said about doctrinal supervision? Where does my District stand in the vineyard? In simple terms these actions should leave no doubt—my District is not the sturdy grapevine but can be better characterized as the poison ivy encircling the healthy plant. INDEED, there is a season for merger of the English District and it is upon us.

Walter C. Dissen, Attorney
North Olmsted, Ohio

God Richly Blesses 801 (Continued from Page 6)

A third series of lectures and discussions in the "Focus on the Seventies" program concerned itself with problems of medical ethics. Bishop Per Lønning from Norway spoke on the subject of abortion, and we had representatives presenting the Roman Catholic and Jewish viewpoints as well as the Lutheran viewpoint on this subject in a panel presentation. Other topics discussed were euthanasia, organ transplants, and the prolonging of life.

Mention should also be made of our "Pastor in Residence" program. Each quarter we bring to the campus a team of two successful parish pastors who spend four days in attending classes, speaking in chapel and at a convocation, and meeting informally with students in a variety of situations in the dining hall and dormitories. We find this a very useful way of encouraging our students in their decision to serve the Lord in the parish ministry and of showing them some of the rewards and satisfactions it brings.

During the past year we also brought to campus two outstanding preachers who presented lectures in the Wenchel Lecture series.

Our goal is to prepare men for the ministry of Jesus Christ in the last part of the twentieth and first part of the twenty first centuries. We want men who are well grounded in the Scriptures and the confessions, and we have attempted to provide in the classroom experiences which will equip our graduates in this way. We also want them to see and understand some of the challenges and opportunities the world presents to men today. We've tried to provide both curricular and cocurricular experiences to this end.

The Lord has been very good to us this past year. He has kept His promises as we have tried to be faithful: all glory belongs to Him. That He has been so good encourages us to believe He will continue to bless Concordia Seminary and the LC-MS. We shall do our best to be faithful to Him.

Dr. John W. Klotz
Dean of Academic Affairs
Concordia Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

A Respon

THERE are many and diverse misrepresentations and misinterpretations of what has happened in Synod in regard to the Board of Missions. In the midst of all this confusion we wish to set forth our deep convictions and Mission Visions. We feel constrained to share with you what we consider to be a Responsible Mission as we look to the future in the context of the past and present.

I. Our Basic Responsibility

WE humbly understand that only the power of the Gospel makes man a responsible being. Christ alone can make us to respond to His redeeming love and to His powerful word; He alone can make one respond to the will of a Synod, sister churches and missions around the world. The Christ who was sent to us, enables us to respond to the needs of unreached people everywhere and sends us to those very people. II Cor 5:14-21.

A) *Responsibility in Mission* begins, continues and ends with a response to the Lord who loved us and gave Himself for us. The Gospel enables us to evangelize, to go and tell and to witness to the ends of the earth.

Therefore our mission is based on what God had done for us in Christ. It is God's Mission. He has created the Church. He gave it its mission. He sends the whole church to the whole world. The initiative and power all rests in Christ and His Work of Salvation.

B) *A Responsible Mission* is one that also responds to God's Word. The authority in mission is from God who is revealed in Holy Scripture.

God's Word norms our faith and life and that includes our mission. It determines, shapes and directs our mission. It makes mission an imperative and the primary task of the church—that is—to declare the Good News of Jesus Christ.

This then commits us to a definite view of Salvation, justification by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone.

A responsible Mission will be committed to both proclamation and deeds of love, realizing that there is no substitute for declaring that God was in Christ, reconciling the World to Himself.

God's Word moves us to be of one heart and mind (I Corinthians 1:10). A goal must be to have no Gospel and doctrinal differences.

According to Scripture, "Making Disciples" is the one objective. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, ministering the Word and Sacraments, the church is going into all the World and making disciples of all people (Luke 24:44-50; Matthew 28:18-20).

Our mission under the Word is a continuous process by which men are converted to Jesus Christ, becoming responsible church members and reproducing responsible Christians and congregations. The church is God's agent for dynamic evangelism. This dynamic of "Making Disciples" involves people, laity and clergy alike—people are both the object and the agent of evangelistic strategy in the Scriptures.

With all our heart we respond to Holy Scriptures which makes evangelism and the salvation of men the vital dynamic mission of the church and which calls for the whole church to be mobilized to bring the whole gospel to the whole world.

C) *Mission Responsibility* demands a loving response to the needs and will of our sister churches and mission fields. It means we affirm the importance of the national church, not under the control of a Board but under the control of the Holy Spirit by God's Holy Word and in response to our Savior's Will.

Responsibility calls for the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and sister churches to be real and full partners with a responsible and distinctive contribution to each other and to the World.

D) *A Responsible Mission* demands a response to the unreached people everywhere. In these days God is giving His people an opportunity for world-wide witness. In 1830 the population of the world was one billion. Today it is four billion, of which approximately three billion are unreached. We dare not be people blind. Evangelization must take seriously the hues and colors, the contours and the character of the diverse peoples of the World, who live in distant lands, in tribes, in desolate places, in cities, in towns, in villages, far and near as individuals and as groups.

Eighty-seven percent can be reached only by cross-cultural evangelism. (No near neighbor Christian to evangelize them.) It is our hearts' desire that the life-style of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod be an *evangelistic thrust* that reaches the unreached and the untouched in order that more and more people be converted to faith in Jesus Christ.

Responsible action on the part of the Board for Missions in the past has concerned itself with church-mission relationships, sister church relationships, board-staff-field relationships, job descriptions and the like.

The Board had hoped to secure a full-time resource person who would work with our world missionaries in the field in developing a greater expertise in effective techniques of evangelism in their areas and cultures.

Comprehensive goals for 1973-75 were adopted with great joy and anticipation. In January of 1974 the Board for Missions resolved to establish an ad hoc committee on objectives, goals, priorities and organization. (Tabled because of staff problems.)

In order to carry out our God-given and Synod-given responsibility, we sought to deal evangelically with those staff members and missionaries that were involved in ELIM.

Christian responsibility also called for attempts at reconciliation in everyway with the staff—including full co-operation with the synodical Board of Directors.

Taking its responsibility seriously, we not only had discussion forums on the issues, but also in an April, 1974 resolution, we reiterated our dedication to be obedient to Christ's missionary command to move forward in accord with the Biblical principles of Mission.

In response to the Lord and the will of Synod in May and August, 1974, the Board resolved to proceed in consultation with staff, missionaries, sister churches, district mission departments and the Commission on Theology and Church Relations in a study to produce a policy statement acceptable to the Board staff, missionaries and sister churches (Resolution 1-06 New Orleans).

Recognizing that only the Scriptures give us the adequate and fitting affirmations of mission, we also fully endorse the *Mission Affirmations* according to Resolution 1-06 of New Orleans and endorse the September, 1974, C.T.C.R. Document "The Mission of the Christian Church in the World"—a review of the 1965 Mission Affirmations.

ple Mission

II. Responsible Actions Not Fully Accomplished

WE attempted to plan and act responsibly in Christ's mission according to our theological and missiological convictions. But several factors prevented us from carrying out this responsibility effectively:

1) *Our own sinfulness* at times made us insensitive, side-tracked us, and gave us myopic vision in our mission.

2) *Doctrinal discord* over the Scriptural (II Thessolians 1:8) and Confessional teaching that those who do not know God as well as those who disobey the Gospel will be eternally lost; that proclamation of the Gospel is our primary, central and indispensable task with priority in principle, although the fruits of faith, good works, are also indispensable; that we must not agree to disagree in doctrinal matters under the umbrella of the centrality of the Gospel and love.

3) *The contemplated strategy of*, a) entering a new area in the world upon the invitation of an already existing church in that land which minimizes Christ's mandate to go, and B) not looking for new places to begin mission work, but developing the churches already there in their ministry.

4) *Administratively*, some staff failed to support the Board policies and decisions and encouraged a dissenting view in our Synod and among Sister Churches. In-house actions were made public. On one occasion staff refused discussion with Board representatives. After ELIM and Seminex came into existence, a number of the Board's staff aligned themselves with their philosophy of mission. In fact, they and some Board members participated in the formation of ELIM and have supported it to this day. In the forums for reconciliation devised by staff, the Board was asked to concede to points that were the issues to be discussed before the talks could proceed. Finally, the Board felt that its staff failed to consult it sufficiently in matters that it must decide as duly elected for that purpose.

III. Determined in Hope to Carry Out God's Mission in Our Time

UNDER the guidance of God's revealed will in the Scriptures and by the power of the Great Missioner, the Holy Spirit, we are determined in the evangelical spirit of Christ to carry out His mission in a responsible manner.

1) *We are determined* not to call a moratorium on Christ's mission for the church, except that it may be a temporary measure that will actually increase His mission, but continue to pursue it under the commission of Christ (Matthew 28: 18-19) until He comes again in ultimate victory (Matthew 24:14).

2) *We propose to reach* out ever more in a dynamic, people-oriented, aggressive endeavor to the 2.8 billion majority of the world's population who are unbelievers, not only in areas contiguous to those of the sister churches and mission fields, but also in new and unevangelized areas. We shall not ignore other Christian churches in this endeavor. We shall cooperate and coordinate with other Christian churches in a Christian approach to ministry in the cities, the country, institutions of mercy, on the campus, and in theological education, as long as we are able to uncompromisingly bear witness to and use the pure Word of God and the Sacraments as set forth in the Lutheran Confessions. Without disregarding doctrinal differences we hope to boldly confess the truth in love in external cooperation with, rather than isolation from Christian brethren.

3) *We do not seek* to control our sister churches or home congregations, but wholeheartedly desire the servant role, and to interact with them in a genuine, Scriptural mutuality, interdependence and complementarity. At the same time we recognize each other's independent selfhood in subservience to Christ alone, and capability by the power of the Holy Spirit to carry on Christ's mission in that place and to the whole world. To stir one another up to even greater efforts in evangelistic outreach which is the greatest task and challenge of the church, and to involve all of Christ's people in doing this, are our earnest objectives.

4) *Taking seriously* the changed and changing situation in the world, particularly nationalism, secularism and the resurgence of non-Christian religions, we are convinced that we shall have to continue to culturally attune our efforts in Christ's Mission, without forfeiting His uniqueness and finality, and to creatively devise new and fitting approaches to our global task.

5) *We are determined* to continue to make our mission endeavors Christ-centered, where the communication of the good news actually is primary and receives priority in principle though not always chronologically, not neglecting but purposefully carrying on a ministry of concern and love to meet the physical, mental and social needs of our fellowmen. We are resolved to send out people on Christ's Mission until His return in the manner most apropos to the situation, and at the same time accomplish the other half of our apostolate to develop people and resources to aid sister churches throughout the world in their Christian ministry.

6) *Until our Lord* has retracted His injunctions to pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest and to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations, the day of Mission and of the missionary is not yet past. What are definitely passé and infeasible are colonialistic, paternalistic, authoritarian types of mission efforts. As in the past, we are calling for the sending of a type of missionary who can both adapt to the situation and in context creatively carry on his ministry for Christ. As in the past, he is to be both dedicated to God, serving Him in a mature saving and living faith, and dedicated to his fellowman, serving him in humble servanthood, with flexibility and initiative amid revolutionary change.

7) *We are dedicated* to interpreting God's mission and our participation at different places on the globe to our fellow Christians in a realistic and personalized way, so as to develop the personal involvement of every Christian in Christ's mission. We shall continue to work for this involvement, equipping and employing Christ's people for their global task, and helping our sister churches to do the same.

8) *Considering all of the above*, we are determined to administer God's mission for the Missouri Synod accordingly in an orderly way and in the best possible manner, using the Scripture, Lutheran Confessions and the Mission Affirmations that we reaffirmed in New Orleans as determinants and guides.

The Rev. W. J. Sohns
The Rev. Otto Hintze
Concordia Theological Seminary
Springfield, Illinois

The Problem of ELIM

THE founding of Evangelical Lutherans in Mission (ELIM) and the development of its program in the last year-and-a-half are to be sincerely regretted. Formed to protest what it called "errant actions" of the majority at the New Orleans synodical convention, ELIM has become an organized movement in opposition to the doctrinal position affirmed by the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod at this convention. ELIM has allied itself with and supported the theological stance of the former Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, faculty majority—now teaching at the Seminary in Exile (Seminex)—a position which the Synod has recognized as embracing matters of false doctrine "running counter to the Holy Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, and the synodical stance and" which "for that reason cannot be tolerated in the church of God, much less be excused and defended" (FC, SD, Preface, 9)" (New Orleans Resolution 3-09). It is for this reason that the president of Synod wrote in the *Lutheran Witness* (9/16/73) shortly after the organization of ELIM: "Much as I regret to say it, this action is a rebellion not only against our Synod and its recent convention but, more importantly, against God's holy, inspired, and inerrant Word."

WHEN Seminex was established in early 1974, ELIM undertook the financial support of this extra-synodical operation. Through appeals to individuals and congregations it solicited funds from Synod's members not only for Seminex but also for an alternative mission program called "Partners in Mission," which was launched last spring without synodical Board of Missions or other official approval. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been gathered in this way, many of these contributions diverted from the synodical treasury and the maintenance of the church's approved educational and missionary endeavors. Certainly the shortage in Synod's income during the past fiscal year is attributable in part to ELIM's ingathering of funds.

Such churchwide solicitation of financial contributions from Synod's membership, without synodical Board of Directors approval, and their use for the support of para-synodical agencies and activities is in direct violation of the covenant relationship into which we, the members of Synod, have entered with one another. Synod's Board of Directors felt constrained to point this out in its June 1974 position statement on ELIM, which asserted in part:

WHEREAS, The announced purposes of the Evangelical Lutherans in Mission (ELIM) to solicit support within the Synod of congregations and individuals alike, which solicitation is announced as an "alternative" to the support of the Synod, are contrary to the following Handbook provisions:

[Here follows the citation of Bylaws 2.85c,2 and 9.73b, which place authorization of the solicitation of funds across district lines solely in the hands of the synodical Board of Directors, forbidding all such appeals which have not received this Board's approval.]

WHEREAS, ELIM has begun an ingathering of funds, the purposes of which are to operate a seminary in exile, to fund an independent mission society, to issue publications such as *Missouri in Perspective*, and to fund an organizational structure to support these purposes; and

WHEREAS, These objects define in part a visible church

here on earth and *ELIM therefore becomes substantially a church* (emphasis ours); therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors by this resolution advise the Synod that the *Board views the activities of ELIM as being divisive within the church* (Art. III, synodical Constitution), and has [as having] the potential for division of the Synod (emphasis ours); and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Board encourage all within the Synod who are involved in the activities of ELIM to refrain from any disturbance of the church or any improper attempt to take upon themselves the objectives of the Synod.

ELIM's divisive activity is causing the Synod to become a house divided against itself; it is destructive of our walking together in the Word and work of the Lord as a "Synod." In short, ELIM has become far more than a minority organization for the registration of dissent in the church; it is an agency fostering disobedience to the Word of God and our synodical constitution and bylaws. Its purposes and goals are in conflict with the Synod's own purposes and goals. It promotes disunity and discord in the Synod, as it continues to support the theology, personnel, operation, and recruitment program of Seminex; to urge the unconstitutional acceptance of unendorsed Seminex graduates as pastors of our congregations; to interfere with the synodical Board for Missions' implementation of the mission policies, and its administration of the mission program, of Synod; to divert funds from the support of the synodical work program; to bypass the synodically established channels for the orderly expression and treatment of dissent; and to employ the public news media to air grievances against fellow-Lutherans and criticisms of the Synod.

TO engage in divisive activity is a serious sin in the sight of God. The Biblical ideal is that unity of conviction and confession of God's truth—confession via lip and life—should prevail among God's people (compare Romans 15:5-6; I Corinthians 1:10). This ought especially be achieved in a confessional body like our Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Thus St. Paul warns against those who bring discord into the church's ranks, as, for example, in Romans 16:17, where he writes: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."

We must, therefore, earnestly ask that ELIM, as it is presently constituted and operative, cease and desist from its activity and disband its organization. We must plead with our fellow-Lutherans and congregations who are involved in ELIM to stop undergirding this agency and to give their full support to Synod. We must urge those who feel compelled to voice objection to actions taken by the Synod to follow the procedures the church had created for the expression of dissent, so that these matters may be handled in decency and order.

Our synodical convention floor committees held their meetings at the beginning of this month in St. Louis, a number of them grappling with the problems in our fellowship caused by ELIM. They had to consider questions (among others) like these: What specific procedures shall be recommended to the

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The Danger of Independent Seminaries

MORE than 38 years ago J. Gresham Machen, a leading conservative theologian, wrote: "As go the theological seminaries, so goes the church. That is certainly true in the long run" (*The Christian Faith in the Modern World*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1936, p. 65). The logic is obvious. Seminaries train pastors, and pastors teach both children and adults in the congregations. Seminary graduates who have learned to preach the Word of God make for strong congregations with solid foundations. Seminary graduates who have not learned to preach the Word of God make for weak congregations with no foundations. History had also made this point quite forcibly for Machen in his own church, the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. The importance of seminary education is clearly seen in the tragic history of the liberalization of that church. There are important lessons in that history, and the Missouri Synod should learn them as we prepare for the Anaheim Convention.

Machen was the most important conservative theologian in the Presbyterian church during the controversies of the 1920's and 1930's. He waged a valiant struggle to keep his church close to its historic confessions (the Westminster Confession and Catechisms), but it was a losing cause. Liberal forces, which favored toleration of theology that was both unpresbyterian and unchristian, were well on the way to dominance in that church by 1925. Their power resulted from the liberalization of the seminaries in the previous fifty years.

THE higher critical method and doctrinal deviations that resulted from it were brought into this country by men who did graduate study in Germany. This different kind of theology was becoming an issue for the Presbyterian church already in the 1870's and 1880's.

One of the most controversial liberals was Charles A. Briggs. After graduate study in Germany he became a professor at Union Theological Seminary, New York, in 1876. He taught the familiar liberal falsehoods about the Bible and strongly downgraded its authority. In 1890 the directors of the seminary elected him to a new professorship. In 1891 the General Assembly (roughly equivalent to a synodical convention in the LC-MS) exercised its power to veto this move. But it did no good because the directors of the seminary reorganized it as an institution independent of the Presbyterian church. Even though Briggs was defrocked by the General Assembly in 1893, he and other liberal faculty members continued to train liberal pastors for the church. Union graduates could become pastors because the licensing and ordination of candidates were entirely in the hands of the presbyteries, the regional level in the Presbyterian structure.

The supply of liberal pastors from Union was augmented by the graduates of other seminaries. Most of the other seminaries succumbed more quietly to liberal theology. In the 1920's the only major seminary of that church body that was still conservative was Princeton, where Machen was assistant professor of New Testament. In 1926 Princeton's Board of Directors elected him to a different professorship, that of Apologetics and Ethics. The General Assembly, in which a liberal majority of both clergy and laymen had finally been achieved in the middle of that decade, delayed action on his election pending an investiga-

tion of the seminary. At the school the president, J. Ross Stevenson, and a liberal faculty minority were trying to move the seminary in a liberal direction while the faculty majority and the Board of Directors were seeking to preserve its traditional stance. The General Assembly intervened in 1929 to force the administration's policies on the seminary by reorganizing it under a new board, to which it elected a liberal majority.

LIKE Briggs, Machen was defrocked in 1936, which probably signified complete liberal dominance in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. Like Briggs, Machen was also involved in an independent institution. In 1929 he helped found Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. Several presbyteries did ordain Westminster graduates, but the numbers were by no means sufficient to stem the liberal tide. Such an independent seminary was entirely constitutional in the Presbyterian church, but it should be clear to the reader of *Affirm* that it is by no means constitutional in the LC-MS (cf. Synodical Bylaw 4.15).

Pastors have a tremendous influence in the church, and seminary education has a tremendous influence on pastors. Every creature reproduces after its own kind. When Missouri Synod Lutherans see how liberal seminaries liberalized the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., which had been largely a strong confessional church, they must view Seminex with great alarm. Union Seminary once defied the doctrinal standards of its denomination, set itself up independent of the church, and made a very significant contribution to the growth of liberal theology in the Presbyterian church. Seminex is an attempt to do the same thing in the Missouri Synod. It could be the prelude to a great tragedy for our synod and for everyone who profits by our ministries if Seminex is allowed to supply pastors to our congregations. The point is very timely: "As go the theological Seminaries, so goes the church."

John M. Drickamer, Student
Concordia Theological Seminary
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The Problem of ELIM

(Continued from Page 10)

church for the implementation of the Biblical directive to "avoid" those who persist in making divisions in the church? Shall evangelical disciplinary action be taken against synodical and district officials who continue to espouse ELIM's cause? Against top leaders of the ELIM movement? Against Seminex professors? Against college instructors and others who go on openly supporting the ELIM objectives and program? The proposals of these floor committees are now (by the time these lines reach our readers) before our convention delegates and the church. God graciously grant the delegates, who will have to make the far-reaching decisions relative to these proposals at Anaheim, an understanding of the course which the church should follow in dealing with ELIM and related issues and agencies troubling the Synod today!

Dr. Walter A. Maier
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Common Ground or Mirror of Difference?

Lord, help us even to retain
The Catechism's doctrine plain
As Luther taught the Word of Truth
In simple style to tender youth. (L.H. 288)

THIS article is being written with the full knowledge that it may bring criticism of its being naive and over-simplified. However, it appears that for clergy and laity alike it is at times essential to avoid overly technical terms and state ideas in as simple a language as possible.

Let us take a set of statements that have had and continue to have wide consensus and ask that they be used as the beginning of reconciliation or, if not reconciliation, at least a means whereby people can openly say that they honestly disagree with them:

1. The Bible is the Word of God because men wrote it by inspiration of God.
2. "By inspiration of God" means that God the Holy Ghost moved the holy men to write, and put into their minds the very thoughts which they expressed and the very words which they wrote.
3. Every word of the Bible is God's Word and therefore the Bible is without error.
4. The Law teaches us Christians which works we must do to lead a God-pleasing life.
5. The Law must be preached to all men, but especially to impenitent sinners; the Gospel must be preached to sinners who are troubled in their minds because of their sins.
6. Sin was brought into the world by the devil, who was once a holy angel but fell away from God, and by man who of his own free will yielded to the temptation of the devil.
7. The Holy Christian Church is the Communion of Saints.
8. The Scriptures teach that at the time of death the soul of the believer is at once received into the presence of Christ and that at the Last Day the believer will live with Christ, according to body and soul, in eternal joy and glory.
9. The Lord's Supper must be denied to those who are known to be ungodly and impenitent; to those who have given offense and have not removed it; and to those of a different faith, since the Lord's Supper is a testimony of the unity of faith.

HERE we have a set of statements not from a single man being used for purposes other than the originally intended ones. Here we have statements certainly not written with political motivation or for the intimidation of any particular group. Here we have statements that literally tens of thousands (yea,

probably hundreds of thousands) of Lutherans have learned and relearned and were, certainly for most of them, included in that body of doctrine that on the day of their confirmation they promised faithfully to uphold. Yes, here we have statements that are taken directly from *A Short Explanation of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism* ("The Catechism") that has been used for many years as a partial basis for Religion instruction in our Christian Day Schools and certainly for an equal number of years for confirmation instruction.

The above statements certainly do not form a comprehensive list of doctrinal statements. But, it seems that agreement to believe, honor, uphold, and teach according to them would go a long way toward reestablishing a unity that we once had when the Catechism was almost universally used throughout the Missouri Synod as a part of our religious instruction. In fact, it is difficult to avoid the thought that there may have been the conscious effort in some quarters to minimize Catechism instruction because personal opinion and beliefs differed from clear teachings put forth therein.

The tragedy of people within the Synod no longer being able to agree on the above statements and of the Catechism's falling into disuse in many congregations can be exemplified in a remark made to me recently by a Lutheran high school student in which he exclaimed, "I don't know what the Lutheran Church teaches!"

SOME may not like that a synod uses "A Handbook of Christian Doctrine" (The Catechism) to teach a common understanding of the minimal doctrinal basis for our joining together in a synod. Some may not like that Synod in convention, by majority votes, declares its understanding of the doctrinal consensus that has held us together for years and then pleads with its professors, pastors, and teachers by the mercies of God to teach in accordance with them. Some may not like that Synod must finally, when urgings and pleadings have been repeatedly ignored, insist upon the use of this doctrinal consensus in the classroom and parish. But woe be to that church body where individual persons or individual faculties can decide that the church body is wrong and without convincing either the clergy or the laity of this, launch forth into the effort of changing the doctrinal position of their church by teaching doctrines contrary to those "which we have learned." The bitter fruits of such a venture, in my opinion, are just beginning to show. The real devastation lies in the future.

However, our confidence must continue to be that the Lord will indeed "make all things work out for the good to them that love Him." Therefore, let those of us who wish to continue in the Word as we have been taught it remain steadfast. I believe that there are literally hundreds of thousands of us who still believe the same and who, when the doctrinal differences (even just those on which the above nine statements will throw some light) are openly seen, will draw together. Then, we will again become a unified synod joyfully carrying out our mission of going into all the world to make disciples by baptizing them in the name of the Triune God and teaching them to observe all things whatsoever we have been commanded by our Lord, knowing that He has promised to be with us even unto the end of the world.

Dr. Melvin L. Zilz
Concordia Senior College
Fort Wayne, Indiana

On The News Front

A news release from LC-MS recently carried the following information,

Eight district presidents of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod have issued a lengthy statement explaining why they were unable to support a recent Council of Presidents resolution which was aimed at letting the council settle the matter of district presidents who have been charged with improper ordination of Seminex graduates.

The statement, titled "A Call to Face the Issues," claims that those who ordained Seminex graduates "... are not, in our opinion, in violation of the Synod's constitution and bylaws." The paper then lists four major reasons in support of their positions: the right of the congregations to ordain pastors; the right of congregations to disregard synodical resolutions if deemed contrary to the Word of God or inexpedient; the constitution cannot be interpreted in opposition to Scripture; and the council, by its repeated efforts to place Seminex candidates, has affirmed their fitness.

While this news release speaks for itself, you will find scattered throughout the pages of this issue of *Affirm* a variety of comments on it, including the Baur article on the autonomy of the congregation which expresses principles related to this issue.

ECHOES from the theological convocation recently held in St. Louis continue to sound throughout Missouri. Here are a few from conservatives:

When using a secular instrument (namely, small groups, plenary sessions, etc.) to solve vital issues of Biblical truth, it may be useful to suggest reading the fifteenth chapter of Acts. Can you imagine that earliest of all theological convocations in the Church resorting to a totally secular methodology to deal with issues of truth? Can you envision a dozen or even thirty facilitators at work arranging with smaller buzz groups what issues were to be discussed and in what manner so as not to jeopardize the possibility of rediscovering a consensus?

If I may be allowed a personal observation at this point: During the nearly three months I served as acting president of the Seminary, I regularly received calls from various kinds of organizations which specialize in settling disputes, offering their services for purposes of negotiation. They all got the same answer: "This is not a labor-management dispute; it concerns the issue of truth; and that is not negotiable."

The Convocation revealed to what frightening degree some think of doctrinal items in terms of labor union issues and tactics. Few things can be more deadly for the spiritual health of our church body than reducing matters concerning Biblical revelation to the level of secular methodology. As a very distinguished theologian once observed, when Martin Buber's advocacy of dialog was making its first inroads into Christian theology: "God did not call us to dialogue, but to obey."

—Dr. Martin H. Scharlemann

Confusions of meaning emerged clearly in some statements by ELIM representatives. For example, Dr. Ralph Klein permitted himself the liberty of blurring or confusing the terms he uses. For him historical criticism is both a method as well as a "neutral tool." But he must know that "method" is commonly a definite system of procedure. A "neutral tool" ("like a hammer") cannot be a definite system of procedure. Historical criticism may indeed use various instruments to accomplish its purposes, but it is in itself a policy for the interpretation of the Scriptures. Dr. Klein affirmed both *sola scriptura* (Scripture alone) and its correlative interpretative principle that Scripture only interprets Scripture. At the same time he blandly contradicted such affirmations by his insistent adherence to inherently faithless principles, policies, and programs of interpretation which of necessity belong to the historical critical method.

Dr. Richard Klann

On The News Front: (Continued from Previous Page)

1. Scriptures—The Christian Church's history is marked by many doctrinal controversies. How were they settled, these opposing views held by fallible men? By submitting them to the infallible decision of Scriptures. In this manner the Missouri Synod, in the past, also repeatedly has found peace. It was only a question of determining what Scripture said. That settled the matter. Now, for the first time in Synod's history, the controversy is about Scripture itself. The very judge who has always settled our differences is now questioned. The historical-critical method of interpreting the Bible makes it impossible to get a decision from that Bible. This is precisely the reason why the controversy has dragged on for twenty years.

Unfortunately, a major essay designed to get us into the basic question of how we view and interpret Scriptures failed to come to grips with it. We talked about and around the problem, but it was still with us at the end. Thank God, we still have large areas of doctrinal agreement among us, but if Scripture goes, then the areas of agreement are doomed to erosion. We say that the Scriptures are "the only rule and norm of faith and practice." The question, What Scriptures? must be settled soon.

2. Facts—Facing facts is also essential to settling controversies. They were hard to come by at the convocation. Terms long in use among us, such as inerrancy, inspiration, and authority, were used in new and slippery ways. Some made statements which are contradicted by what previously has been said in print. It is a harsh word, I know, but in this controversy we could stand a liberal dose of integrity and honesty. Nothing is to be gained by singing a theological version of "The more we get together the happier we'll be." Not if we're serious.

—Pastor E. J. Otto

THE Lay Lectures sponsored by Concordia Seminary entitled "Issues/1975" has met with overwhelming and enthusiastic lay support. Some 550 people registered for the series of 12 lectures spread over six Thursday evenings.

Because of this tremendous interest, the Seminary is making available tapes and printed copies of the lectures to interested individuals and groups. The entire series on 90-minute cassettes can be purchased from the Office of Continuing Education for \$12.50. This includes one set of outlines for each of the lectures. Printed copies of all 12 lectures are available at \$1.50. For groups interested in hearing the cassettes and following them on the outlines, extra copies of the lecture outlines are available at 50 cents for each set.

We suggest that Bible Classes, LLL's, LWML's, and other interested lay groups order a set of the cassettes and as many extra sets of the lecture outlines as are needed. If you would like to reproduce the outlines on your own, you may do so: in that case you would need to order only the \$12.50 set of cassettes.

Orders should be sent to "Office of Continuing Education, Concordia Seminary, 801 De Mun Avenue, St. Louis, Mo. 63105." Please include your remittance with the order.

Tapes of the individual lectures are also available at \$2.50 for each cassette which covers two lectures. There is a list of these in the May issue of the LUTHERAN LAYMAN. Topics include "The Historical-Critical Method," "Missouri Synod History," "The Synodical Handbook," "Inerrancy and Inspiration," "Miracles," "Creation," "The Old Testament," "The Law," "Gospel Reductionism," "Certification," and "The Layman's Role."

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On The News Front: (Continued from Previous Page)

THE Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod recently released its document, *The Inspiration of Scripture*. This excellent and authoritative document, which in its 18 pages sets forth the Lutheran view of inspiration, is well worth reading. Copies may be had from the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 500 N. Broadway, St. Louis, Mo. 63102.

THE *Forum Letter* of May, 1975 contains a moderate view of some of the events of the Convocation. The long paragraph which follows is worth reading carefully and in full:

As one Seminex prof remarked, "I'm not sure from day to day what our approach is. One day we're going to candidly state our differences and let the devil take the hindmost. The next we're trying to demonstrate that we believe the same thing 'old Missouri' always believed about inerrancy and all the rest." The Seminex reps at the convo tended to take the second tack, as they did at New Orleans in 1973. Of course Seminex has a continuing concern about placing people in LCMS parishes (this month 90 interns were placed—55 in LCMS and 35 in LCA and ALC). But Seminex credibility is strengthened by candor, not by pretending there are few if any significant differences. If, for example, the historical-critical method doesn't make that much difference in what one believes about the Bible or how one does theology, why bother everybody by insisting on using it? David Lotz, an LCMS prof teaching at Union Seminary, New York asserts that Prof. Martin Franzmann's paper at the convo "simply evades the problem." It is not enough to say that historical criticism means "discriminating appreciation." "The historian," says Lotz, "must cross-examine, test, weigh, probe and analyze all written records of the past. If he fails to do this he *de-facto* surrenders his claim to the title of historian!" In short, one cannot honestly practice historical criticism and be "under the Scriptures" in the sense that the Preus group means "under." From there one goes on to make the case that an historical approach to the scriptures strengthens rather than weakens the proclamation of the Gospel, is more obedient to our understanding of God's will and is in accord with the tradition of Missouri as it was developing prior to the Preus reversal. (It is obviously not in accord with the majority tradition of Missouri, say, of 50 years ago.) If LCMS is to divide, it would seem preferable to divide in a climate of candor. If a new formation is to take place, it would seem imperative that it not be founded upon evasiveness.

DR. Waldo Werning's *The Nature of Christianity* has been released in a special pre-publication edition. Its sub-title, "A Theological Study of the Supernatural Mission of the Christian and the Church," indicates the content of the book. Dr. Werning is an authority on both stewardship and missions and his volume is well worth reading.

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Editorial Policy

While the articles in *Affirm* with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

Affirm

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On The News Front: (Continued from Page 15)

AFFIRM still has some copies of *Occasional Papers*, a 40 page brochure it published a while back. Its articles feature Dr. Richard Klann, Dr. Martin H. Scharlemann, Dr. Horace Hummel, Dr. Robert Preus, in addition to its major article by the Rev. Kurt Marquart of the Lutheran Church of Australia. These articles remain among the best Affirm has published. You may order Occasional Papers from Affirm for \$1 a copy, postpaid; please send your order with your remittance to Affirm's address.

THE May 1975 *Forum Letter* also contained information about the *Lutheran Church in Mission*. It said in part,

*Lutheran Church in Mission . . . LCM is a standby corporation for an interim church body, if and when LCM members find that necessary. Congregations that cannot or are not permitted to carry out their mission in the LCMS will find in LCM a life boat, a way of holding people together, and a chance to share in a realignment toward greater Lutheran unity in America. LCM is not designed to be just another church body, but an interim and uniting agency for Lutheran mission. Its confessional base will be that shared by American Lutherans and included in the constitution of the LCMS, but with careful safeguards against anyone being able to, *de facto* or *de jure*, add to the confessional subscription. LCM will be in fellowship with all who confess the Gospel as exhibited in the historic Lutheran Symbols, including the LCMS. (Whether LCMS will be in official fellowship with LCM is, of course, their decision.) LCM may, if activated, begin with relatively few congregations and individual members. If activated, however, it will mean that conditions in LCMS are such that other congregations' joining will be but a question of time (unless, of course, there is much more widespread compromise of the Gospel than is anticipated). The period following the Disneyland convention may be crucial. LCM clearly supports ELIM. ELIM's purpose is to be the confessing movement *within* LCMS. Unless LCMS officialdom decides otherwise, membership in LCMS, ELIM and LCM can be held simultaneously. One joins LCM now on an "if needed" basis. LCM would not build its own leadership training program but use those in existence, including Seminex. Similarly, LCM would support and utilize ELIM's Partners in Mission program. LCM is in close cooperation with other institutional alternatives being explored in the event of LCM's dividing. There should be no conflict. If and when, there might be an open conference to pool resources and form ties necessary to keeping diverse strategies coordinated. Details of LCM's polity are to be decided by its membership. LCM will likely be affiliated with LCUSA and LWF. At present, informal contact between LCM members and ALC and LCA leadership is strongly encouraging. The pension, welfare and tax exemption questions pose no problem for congregations joining LCM. And of course any member, congregational or individual, can withdraw from LCM at any time.*

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"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13

GRACIOUS FATHER, BLESS US!

Most holy Triune God, send a special measure of the Holy Spirit's guidance and blessing upon us as we open this 51st regular convention of our Synod!

These are troubled days in our church body as brother doubts brother and as many of our energies are expended in controversy rather than in carrying out the constructive mission of the church leading souls to a saving faith in Jesus Christ, Lord, we confess our many sins and ask for Your forgiveness for our past failures and Your blessing for the future!

Let the truth of Your Word be our guide, and by its power may we be blessed with a united walking-together, where there has been division and separation: with love and trust, where there has been animosity and suspicion; with self-discipline, where there has been self-aggrandisement; with honor and

respect for authority, where there has been a tendency to become a law unto ourselves; and with a complete submission to Your Word instead of placing our human wills and minds over that Word. Send a healing balm to soothe the wounds that have been incurred among us in our controversy!

Lord our God, how desperately we need Your blessing and benediction upon this convention! Do not withhold it, we humbly pray!

Bless the president and officers of the Synod, all boards and committees, and all who are in attendance and help them all to draw us together in a oneness of faith under Your revealed Word. Lead us all by Your Holy Spirit to a rededication of ourselves in Your service, faithfully confessing and spreading Your truth!

In Jesus blessed name we pray. Amen.

DOES GERKEN REALLY EXONERATE TIETJEN?

Affirm believes that he does not.

Affirm believes that a cursory analysis as well as the more detailed analysis it offers on the last pages of this issue make very clear Pastor Gerken's well-intentioned but disturbing failure.

Affirm is astonished that the publication of ELIM states, in its lead paragraph, that "The

Rev. Dr. John Tietjen has been cleared of all ... false doctrine charges...." Affirm believes that in this convention issue it easily and fully refutes this assertion.

Moreover, Affirm is just as astonished by the ELIM statement that the Rev. Oscar Gerken "had been given the final disposition of the doctrinal charges against Dr. Tietjen."

(continued on next page)

GERKEN

(continued from previous page)

As Affirm's analysis shows, Rev. Gerken's findings, far from being the last word on the Tietjen matter, opens the door to an appeal procedure first on the district level and then on synodical level. It seems certain that Pastors Harnapp and Buelow, who initiated the charges against Dr. Tietjen, will fully follow the appeal procedure.

Affirm's astonishment concerning the ELIM report extends to such inaccuracies as "the fifteen alleged instances of false doctrine" of Dr. Tietjen (there were five), and such phraseology as "the alleged supporting evidence" (for the false doctrine charges)-since the evidence is quite real and substantial.

HOW PASTOR GERKEN DEALS WITH THE INERRANCY PROBLEM

As one of a number of points made in greater detail on the concluding pages of this issue, on which the Tietjen problem is dealt with, the inerrancy question does illustrate the weakness of the Gerken findings.

In response to questions about chapters of Genesis, Dr. Tietjen told the Rev. Gerken "I believe that the creative days (cf. Exodus 20:9-11) were normal days as we know them. The point at issue, however, is whether the literature of the first chapters of the Bible is to be taken literally and historically. The important thing is to recognize that the intent of the text is to say that God is the Creator who brought all things into being by His almighty Word. The inspired writer is describing the mystery of crea-

tion by making use of our understanding. We cannot fathom the mystery of creation. We simply believe it."

In this statement Dr. Tietjen takes the classic higher critical position concerning the three beginning chapters of Genesis. According to this view, these chapters are not to be considered the factual account of God's creation. Adam and Eve are not the first two real people. Original sin and creative innocence are not real. The days of creation are considered, by him, to be normal days; however, the various interpreters of Scripture are free to consider them otherwise as literature. Dr. Tietjen handles these three chapters of Genesis as the historical critic would handle any other piece of man's literature.

As Dr. Gerken concedes, therefore, "Dr. Tietjen's understanding of the word 'inerrancy' does not coincide with Synod's traditional definition of this term, i.e., that the Holy Spirit preserved the Biblical writers from making errors in the writing of the Scripture." (p. 11)

As Affirm's more detailed study concludes (see the last pages of this issue), "Such a statement would seem to dictate the conclusion that either Dr. Tietjen is guilty of false doctrine or Synod's position on the inerrancy of the Bible is not in harmony with the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. Rev. Gerken, however, draws neither conclusion. He simply absolves Tietjen without setting forth any criteria whatsoever as to why Tietjen's disagreement with Synod's position on inerrancy does not constitute false doctrine."

PROCEDURAL PROBLEMS OF THE GERKEN REPORT

1. The very issuance of Pastor Gerken's report is a violation of synodical by-laws. On the basis of 5.31j the Commission on Constitutional Matters has repeatedly forbidden the St. Louis Seminary Board of Control to release any of the documents connected with the Tietjen case. As long as "appeals are contemplated or pending, there shall be no publicity of the case by any party to the proceedings." This Handbook language is clear. The CCM ruling was known to Pastor Gerken. Yet he chose to violate both the Handbook stipulation and the CCM ruling. Meanwhile, the Board of Control, abiding by both the letter and the spirit of our agreed upon procedures is thereby under disadvantage and resultant criticism.

2. Pastor Gerken (p. 2) states that he operated under Article XIII of the Constitution which provides for expulsion from Synod of members "who act contrary to the confessions laid down in Article II...or persist in an offensive conduct...." Yet in dealing with Dr. Tietjen, Pastor Gerken chose to deal only with doctrinal charges and completely avoided the malfeasance items which involve "offensive conduct."

3. Gerken says he studied the CTCR report, the Faculty Hearings Committee report, and the Board of Control transcript (October 11-12, 1974 B/C meeting) but brushes them aside in reaching his conclusion. In dismissing the CTCR document he justifies his action on the basis that the CTCR was "not acting as a judicial body." He disregards the

fact that the doctrinal questions submitted to the CTCR were, in fact, the charges against Dr. Tietjen and that the CTCR found them indeed to be false doctrine and contrary to the Missouri Synod's doctrinal position.

Pastor Gerken justifies a disregard of the Faculty Hearings Committee report and the Board of Control's proceedings by stating that they were "addressed to the question of Dr. Tietjen's competence as President of Concordia Seminary." His own assignment was "to determine whether Dr. John Tietjen was guilty of false doctrine." The distinction which Pastor Gerken attempts to make between his competence as president and his teaching false doctrine is an impossible one. The simple fact is that the primary consideration in removing Dr. Tietjen from the presidency was his false doctrine.

4. Procedurally, one is surprised that Pastor Gerken satisfied himself with regard to Dr. Tietjen's doctrinal position in one interview but did not consider it necessary to interview Pastors Buelow and Harnapp who filed the doctrinal charges and submitted supporting evidence.

Editorial Policy

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For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

CONFUSION REIGNS AGAIN

Just before the opening of the 51st regular convention of the Synod came a news release that Dr. John H. Tietjen had been cleared by the 1st Vice President of the Missouri District of charges of false doctrine.

This is the latest and most confusing facet of the Tietjen case which began two years ago at the New Orleans convention. Adding to the current confusion were the many commentators, including Paul Harvey, who erroneously stated that Dr. Tietjen had been cleared "by the Missouri Synod."

How did it all begin? Years of growing complaint about the doctrine and sermons of St. Louis Seminary graduates reached a climax in New Orleans resolution 3-12 which, on the basis of massive evidence, called for the immediate resignation of Dr. Tietjen. Due to lack of time in the closing hours of the convention, the delegates referred the matter to the seminary Board of Control (Res. 3-12A). This occurred in July 1973.

In August the new Board of Control, in view of the gravity of the charges against Dr. Tietjen, temporarily suspended him from office in accordance with synodical regulations.

Since even this preliminary action might have resulted in accusations of undue haste, the seminary board withdrew its action and reviewed both the charges and the evidence. In January 1974 Dr. Tietjen was suspended so that the doctrinal questions might be evaluated by Synod's Commission on Theology and Church Relations and the charges might be studied both by a faculty hearings committee and the seminary board. In

October Dr. Tietjen was dismissed from office on five counts of false doctrine and nine of malfeasance.

One question remains: Shall Dr. Tietjen also be removed from membership in the Missouri Synod? Procedures provide that this question be answered by the district in which he served. Claiming conflict of interest, Missouri District president, Dr. Herman Scherer, disqualified himself and turned the matter over to district first vice president, Rev. Oscar Gerken. Disclaiming any interest in the charges aside from false doctrine Pastor Gerken, on the basis of one interview, found no reason to remove Dr. Tietjen from the Missouri Synod ministry. Confusion reigns again.

The case, of course, is still in process and is of no direct concern to this convention. Those filing the original charges against Dr. Tietjen now have the option of appealing the case directly to the synodical president. If that happens, the matter will be referred to the Missouri District Board of Adjudication with final disposition in the hands of the synodical Board of Appeals.

Affirm

Affirm, sponsored by Balance Inc., is published monthly or more frequently by a group of its members concerned about theological and related developments in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

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Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53216

DEALING WITH SOME DISTRICT PRESIDENTS

One of the truly major decisions to face this convention will be how to deal with those district presidents who have authorized the ordination of persons not properly endorsed for the ministry of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (Res. 5-02). Never in its history has the Missouri Synod had to deal with a group of district presidents who deliberately and with foreknowledge violated their oath of office to uphold the Constitution and By-laws of the Synod.

In its resolution on this question the floor committee sets the problem in its proper theological perspective by carefully distinguishing between the power and Office of the Keys and church government. The command of God to proclaim the Gospel and administer the sacraments as well as the divine origin of the holy ministry do not change. Human ordinances, also in church government, do change. Our Constitution provides an orderly procedure to make any necessary changes. However, a major violation by district presidents of our mutually agreed upon rules is something new in our midst and we unhappily are forced to deal with it.

The floor committee's resolution directs the district presidents to abide by our constitutional By-laws concerning the ordination of only those candidates who have been properly endorsed. Looking to the past violations, the resolution calls upon the district presidents to see to it that improperly ordained men become properly endorsed.

Looking to the future, the resolution asks a district president who cannot in good conscience uphold the Constitution and By-laws to resign should not do so. The resolution asks a district president who cannot in good conscience uphold the Constitution and By-laws to resign should not do so. The resolution places him under the pastoral care and discipline of the synodical president. If God-pleasing compliance does not result from the efforts of Synods president, he is authorized to inform the district that a vacancy exists in the office of the district presidency.

The problem of deliberate disobedience to an oath of office is new and almost unbelievable to us. It is a sad problem, but we have the confidence that the delegates will meet it with firmness, realizing that to avoid it would be a vote for anarchy and chaos.

The floor committee's resolution is theologically sound and administratively clear. Resolution 5-02 should be passed.

Editorial Policy

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The Editorial Group

The Rev. Willaim T. Eggers
Richard G. Korthals

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto
Dr. Robert Preus

Dr. Walter A. Maier

TERMINATION FOR NON-TENURED PERSONNEL

As the committee points out in re Resolution 4-04, Decline to Give Reason for Termination of Non-Tenured Personnel, a substantial risk of litigation could result by providing reasons for termination of non-tenured personnel. In the educational this privilege is reserved for tenured personnel. If reason for termination is given non-tenured personnel, this produces a kind of quasi-tenure and provides basis for legal rebuttal on the part of terminated non-tenured personnel.

Two concerns exist on the practical level. First, individual members of the Board which announce the termination may have different reasons for joining in this action. To reach a unanimous decision by the same reasoning process for all the members of the Board would be diffi-

cult if not impossible. To reveal the details prompting a majority decision to terminate would be unfair to the terminated personnel, because it would be incomplete. In case of litigation it would also be unfair to the Board.

Secondly, such a policy of giving reasons for termination of non-tenured personnel would need to be consistent or undue embarrassment could be caused those refused a reason for termination. Yet a consistent policy could mean the revealing of privileged, confidential, or embarrassing documentation to substantiate the dismissal of non-tenured personnel. In Summary, a policy providing reasons for the dismissal of non-tenured personnel produces a kind of quasi-tenure necessitating the creation of a complicated extensive system of Handbook By-Law changes.

THE GERKEN DECISION:

A CLOSER THEOLOGICAL LOOK

On the surface, it would seem that the determination by Missouri District First Vice-President, Oscar A. Gerken, that Dr. Tietjen is not guilty of false doctrine, should be a cause for great rejoicing throughout the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod. On the basis of the findings of false doctrine as set forth in the Report of the Synodical President and Resolution 3-09 of the New Orleans Convention, and on the basis of the determination of the St. Louis Seminary Board of Control, that Dr. Tietjen was guilty of holding and fostering false doctrine, we would assume that under Rev. Gerken's pastoral charge, Dr. Tietjen was brought to a God-pleasing recon-

ciliation with Synod's official doctrinal position. Unfortunately, a close analysis of Rev. Gerken's 17-page report entitled, The Case of the Charges Against Dr. John Tietjen, does not support the assumption, nor does it present members of Synod any reason to rejoice. On the contrary, Rev. Gerken's report actually substantiates the fact that Dr. Tietjen continues to hold and foster doctrinal views which are contrary to the Synod's confessional position.

GOSPEL NORMS THE BIBLE

In 1972, Dr. Preus reported to the Synod that members of the former St. Louis Seminary faculty held a position whereby "The

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Authority of the Bible is based not so much on its divine origin, but on the fact that the Gospel is 'the Power of God unto salvation.' In practice, then, the Gospel becomes the norm, or standard for theology." (Report, Page 45.).

This finding was substantiated by the former faculty's affirmation that "The Gospel gives the Scriptures their normative character, not vice versa." (Faithful, I. p.21; of which Dr. Tietjen was a signer.) Such a position negates our Lutheran Confessional Affirmation that the Holy Scriptures are the only rule and norm according to which all doctrines and teachers alike must be appraised and judged." (FC, EP, RN, 1.) If the Gospel is a doctrine (and surely it is not just a doctrine, but the central doctrine of our faith), then surely Scripture norms the Gospel, not vice versa. Synod in convention at New Orleans condemned this position of the former faculty as "an assault against the very heart and marrow of the Lutheran Confessions" and "a subversion of the authority of Scripture" in Resolution 3-09 (Convention Proceedings, New Orleans, 1973, pp 136, 138). According to Rev. Gerken's Report, Dr. Tietjen continues to steadfastly hold to the principle that the Gospel gives the Scriptures their normative character. Moreover, having recognized this, Rev. Gerken writes: "I am still bothered by the Statement, 'The Gospel gives the Scriptures their normative character, not vice versa.' for it seems to me that such a statement makes the truthfulness of your Scriptures dependent upon its Gospel content rather than upon the fact that God, who does not lie, speaks to us through His

written Word." (p.7). Yet, despite this observation, Rev. Gerken absolves Dr. Tietjen of any false doctrine, even though Synod in convention condemned such a view as one which "cannot be tolerated

in the Church of God much less be excused and defended."(FC, SD, Preface, 9 as cited in Resolution 3-09, Third Resolved). Surely, the fact that Dr. Tietjen continues to hold such an erroneous view and the fact that Rev. Gerken does not in the final analysis join with Synod in censoring such a position must be greeted with much sadness and concern.

INERRANCY

Rev. Gerken's report reflects other instances of failure to deal with Dr. Tietjen within the framework of Synod's Confessional position. In his report, he candidly observes that Dr. Tietjen believes that there are discrepancies in Holy Scripture and that therefore "Dr. Tietjen's understanding of the Word 'inerrancy' does not coincide with Synod's traditional definition of this term, i.e. that the Holy Spirit preserved the Biblical writers from making errors in the writing of the Scriptures." (pg. 11). Such a statement would seem to dictate the conclusion that either Dr. Tietjen is guilty of false doctrine or, Synod's position on the inerrancy of the Bible is not in harmony with the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. Rev. Gerken, however, draws neither conclusion. He simply absolves Tietjen without setting forth any criteria whatsoever as to why Tietjen's disagreement with Synod's position on inerrancy does not constitute false doctrine.

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BIBLICAL HISTORICITY

Much of our Synod's doctrinal controversy has centered upon Biblical authority as it negates to the matter of historicity. New Orleans Resolution 3-09 "Resolved, that the Synod repudiate that attitude toward Holy Scripture, particularly as regards its authority and clarity, which reduces to theological opinion or exegetical questions, matters which are in fact clearly taught in Scripture (e.g. facticity of miracle accounts and their details historicity of Adam and Eve as real persons, ... the Jonah account...)." Despite Synod's clear position on these matters, Rev. Gerken observes that Dr. Tietjen continues to defend the right of individuals to regard the Jonah account as symbolic rather than historical (p. 12) and moreover, that Dr. Tietjen "Does not believe all statements in the initial chapters of the Bible describing the mystery of creation must be understood literally." (p. 13). Once again, either Synod's position is not Biblical and confessional or Dr. Tietjen is guilty of false doctrine. And once again, Rev. Gerken fails in his report to commit himself in either direction, but rather absolves Dr. Tietjen without offering any specific criteria for such a judgment.

DOCTRINAL RESOLUTIONS

On the basis of the foregoing analysis, it appears manifest that Dr. Tietjen does not feel the least constrained to carry out his public ministry in accord with Synod's official doctrinal position as it relates to the whole issue of the nature and extent of

Biblical authority. Tietjen's position on Scripture is clearly opposed to the official stance of Synod as related in A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles, a document which was declared by the New Orleans convention "in all its parts, to be Scriptural and in accord with the Lutheran Confessions." (Resolution 3-01, New Orleans Convention Proceedings, p. 128). Why does not Dr. Tietjen "honor and uphold" such a position? Rev. Gerken's report provides a partial answer. The understanding of "honor and uphold" with which Dr. Tietjen operates, is simply that "we are to pay attention, to listen to what your Synod says." (p. 16). This view falls short of the obligation specifically set forth by Synod. Resolution 2-21 of the Milwaukee convention specifically states that "honor and uphold" means "not merely to examine and study them (doctrinal concerns) but to support, act and teach in accord with them unless they have been shown to be contrary to God's Word." That Tietjen's position is woefully inadequate, is even plain to Rev. Gerken. He candidly observes that he "cannot agree with Dr. Tietjen's understanding of 'honoring and upholding' resolutions of the Synod." (p. 16)

Synod is not in the business of binding anyone's conscience (only the Word of God may bind consciences), but it is in the business of norming and regulating the public ministry of its servants as it seeks to carry out faithfully its confessional commitment and proclamation in the life of the church. It is the opinion of many that Rev. Gerken missed the mark in his synodical supervision and pastoral care of Dr. Tietjen in this matter. We pray that the future deliberations and disposition of this matter, by God's grace, will be more adequate than Pastor Gerken's.

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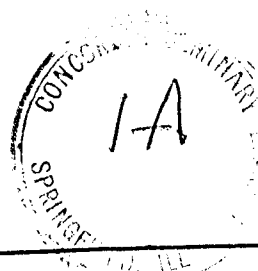
JUL 28 1975



Convention Issue

No. 1A

July 5, 1975



"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13

CONSERVATIVE ELECTION GUIDE

Elections are a vital fact of this convention. Both liberals and conservatives agree on their importance. Election results will determine Missouri's future direction, set the administrative tone of boards and commissions and establish the level of supervision at our colleges and seminaries.

If you read the first issue of the New Orleans convention issue you will discover that then as now the overriding question was whether there was a need to print such a list of suggested candidates. The appearance of the liberal list of preferred candidates led to the decision at New Orleans to print the conservatives election guide.

What has Affirm to offer the delegates about elections which they cannot think through for themselves? A quick glance at the biographical resume of candidates for office reveals a key factor is missing: the theological or doctrinal stance of each individual.

Information about attitudes toward Seminex, ELIM, ALC fellowship, and A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles needs to be made known to the delegates for the wise and conscientious election of responsible personnel.

In the past Moderates have compiled lists to indicate candidates who back their more liberal theology, and it seems unlikely that they will not complete such a list for Anaheim. Conservatives need to compile lists of candidates with a concern for following Scriptural direction in the Synod. Synod conservatives will be back-

ing a group of capable candidates of proven loyalty to the traditional doctrinal stance of Synod and proven opposition to the theology of ELIM.

The following election guide by no means includes all the capable conservative Bible-based and Christ-centered candidates who could serve as nominees! In some instances many conservative nominees are available. But a choice had to be made ONLY to offset the moderate attempt at floor nominations. Various conservatives graciously stepped aside for the sake of the cause and deserve our gratitude.

In preparation of this election guide nominees have been interviewed, evaluated and discussed. The decision concerning conservative nominees resulted from an intense analysis at the grass-roots level of those qualified technically and theologically for the posts for which they have been nominated.

In those few cases where the election guide indicates a nomination from the floor an asterisk is used.

We urge the delegates to examine the list carefully, not to follow a "party line," but because this list represents the earnest efforts of concerned men to insure the election of qualified persons who will support the position of the Synod and the New Orleans Convention. Therefore, candidly and without apology, this list of conservative candidates is offered to the delegates for their prayerful consideration and individual evaluation! May God grant you both wisdom and courage!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

=====

Pastors

✓ Ervin R. Lemke
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Laymen

✓ Gus S. Melde
Dallas, Texas

✓ George H. Mohr
Wauwatosa, Wis.

✓ Carl W. Muhlenbruch
Glenview, Ill.

✓ Edward S. Scott
Denver, Colo.

COMMISSION OF ADJUDICATION

=====

Pastors

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✓ Roger J. Humann
St. Catharines, Ontario

Laymen

✓ Robert I. Doggett
Cincinnati, Ohio

BOARD OF APPEALS

=====

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✓ Elden H. Martens
Frazee, Minn.

Laymen

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✓ Elmer H. Theis
Houston, Tex.

BOARD FOR CHURCH EXTENSION

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Pastors

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Laymen

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✓ Herbert H. Hast
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Teachers

✓ W. M. Graebner
Utica, Mich.

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=====

Pastors

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Laymen

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Chesterland, Ohio

✓ Milton P. Koch
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COMMITTEE FOR CONVENTION NOMINATIONS

=====

Pastors

✓ Paul G. Barth
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✓ Henry Fry
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✓ Eugene F. Klug
Springfield, Ill.

✓ Joseph G. Lavalais
Philadelphia, Pa.

✓ Elwood E. Mather
Glendale, N. Y.

✓ August T. Mennicke
Brainerd, Minn.

✓ John C. Zimmermann
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Laymen

✓ Roy J. Culley
Eastside, Ore.

✓ Marie Meyer
Patchogue, N. Y.

✓ Arthur F. Samuel
San Antonio, Texas

✓ Ivan J. Shields
Tempe, Ariz.

✓ Edgar F. Ziegler
Chaska, Minn.

Teachers

✓ Robert T. Beckmann
Cranston, R. I.

✓ Roger C. Laesch
Milwaukee, Wis.

✓ W. H. Rusch
Ann Arbor, Mich.

BOARD FOR EVANGELISM

=====

Pastors

✓ O. H. Bertram
Toledo, Ohio

Laymen

✓ Walter A. Kaufmann
Mt. Clemens, Mich.

BOARD FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

=====

Pastors

✓ Philip C. Gehlar
Westminster, Cal.

Laymen

✓ Walter F. Brunn
Lebanon, Pa.

Teachers

✓ Dennis Ray Halm
Wauwatosa, Wis.

BOARD FOR MISSIONS

=====

Pastors

✓ Otto C. Hintze
Springfield, Ill.

✓ Waldo Werning
Milwaukee, Wis.

Laymen

✓ Ernest W. Balke
Houston, Texas

✓ Benjamin Dennis
Flint, Mich.

✓ Ralph Marten
Denison, Iowa

Teachers

*George Bluma
Arlington, Neb.

✓ Albert B. Wingfield
Mt. Clemens, Mich.

BOARD OF PARISH EDUCATION

=====

Pastors

✓ G. Waldemar Degner
Ithaca, N. Y.

Laymen

✓ Willis L. Wright
Selma, Ala.

* Write in Candidate

Teachers

✓ Arthur Krafft
Milwaukee, Wis.

✓ Melvin Zilz
Ft. Wayne, Ind.

BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

=====

Pastors

✓ Roy Bleick
Beloit, Wis.

✓ Andrew Simcak, Jr.
Houston, Texas

Laymen

✓ Charles E. Bosma
Indianapolis, Ind.

BOARD OF YOUTH MINISTRY

=====

Pastors

✓ Jack R. Baumgarn
Osceola, Iowa

Laymen

✓ Gordon J. Peeks
North Platte, Neb.

Youth

✓ Brian L. Friedrich
Marcus, Iowa

✓ Rickie J. Krueger
Amherst, Colo

✓ Ruth N. Rogness
Lexington, Ky.

✓ Ken Schurb
Gretna, La.

✓ Connie S. Scott
Bishop, Texas

COMMISSION ON MISSION AND MINISTRY

=====

Pastors

✓ David A. Caspersen
Shelton, Neb.

✓ John L. Heins
Dearborn, Mich.

Laymen

✓ Thomas H. Milldebrandt
Phoenix, Ariz.

✓ W. J. Peavey
Chattanooga, Tenn.

Teachers

✓ Erich A. von Fange
Ann Arbor, Mich.

COMMISSION ON THEOLOGY AND

=====

CHURCH RELATIONS

=====

Pastors

✓ Norbert H. Mueller
Ann Arbor, Mich.

✓ Edward A. Westcott Jr.
Scottsdale, Ariz.

Laymen

✓ Don Ridgeway
Raleigh, N. C.

BOARD OF CONTROL, ANN ARBOR

=====

Pastors

✓ John C. Streit
Detroit, Mich.

Laymen

✓ Ernest C. Laetz
Ann Arbor, Mich.

✓ Robert O. Schoenherr
Ludington, Mich.

Teachers

✓ Justin C. Schwartz
Dearborn, Mich.

BOARD OF CONTROL, AUSTIN
=====

Pastors

✓ *James Blumhorst
Houston, Texas

Laymen

✓ Robert Bauer
Nome, Texas

✓ *Leonard Schroeder
Houston, Texas

Teachers

✓ Clayton A. Fischer
New Orleans, La.

BOARD OF CONTROL, BRONXVILLE
=====

Pastors

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Glendale, N. Y.

Laymen

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Pennsauken, N. J.

✓ *Henry Appel, Sr.
Belle Mead, New Jersey

Teachers

✓ *Robert Beckmann
Cranston, R. I.

BOARD OF CONTROL, CONCORDIA, MO.
=====

Pastors

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St. Louis, Mo.

✓ P. James Schaefer
Jefferson City, Mo.

Teachers

✓ Lester P. Golz
Frohna, Mo.

BOARD OF CONTROL, EDMONTON
=====

Pastors

✓ Vernon A. Raaflaub
Nipawin, Saskatchewan

Laymen

✓ Jay Gable
Richmond, British Columbia

✓ Luther E. Schroeder
Red Deer, Alberta

Teachers

✓ Mark C. Lobitz.
Richmond, British Columbia

BOARD OF CONTROL, FORT WAYNE
=====

Pastors

✓ Allen H. Fedder
Des Plaines, Ill.

✓ Cecil H. Skibbe
Bloomington, Ind.

Laymen

✓ Walther D. Fenner
Columbus, Ind.

✓ Lester A. Trier
Elkhart, Ind.

BOARD OF CONTROL, MILWAUKEE
=====

Pastors

✓ Elmer J. Sedory
Chicago, Ill.

*Write in Candidate

Laymen

✓ Leo Bordeleau (2 year term)
Green Bay, Wis.

(4 year term)

✓ Dale W. Korth
West Allis, Wis.

✓ George Metzger
Grafton, Wis.

Teachers

✓ Richard E. Maas
Menomonee Falls, Wis.

BOARD OF CONTROL, OAKLAND

=====

Laymen

✓ Eileen L. Wiese
Alameda, Calif.

✓ F. William Zipp
San Jose, Calif.

Teachers

✓ Doris Klein
Napa, Calif.

BOARD OF CONTROL, PORTLAND

=====

Laymen

✓ Zane Z. Meranda
Lake Oswego, Ore.

✓ Richard J. Sandman
Missoula, Mont.

Teachers

✓ Richard Ladendorf
Kennewick, Wash.

BOARD OF CONTROL, RIVER FOREST

=====

Pastors

✓ John E. Lutze
Casper, Wyoming

Laymen

✓ Henry O. Koeneman
Western Springs, Ill.

Teachers

✓ Arthur H. Busch
Melrose Park, Ill.

BOARD OF CONTROL, ST LOUIS

=====

Pastors

✓ Edgar F. Rehwaladt
Richfield, Minn.

✓ Neil R. Schmidt
Grand Forks, N. D.

Laymen

✓ Walter C. Dissen
North Olmsted, Ohio

Teachers

(2 year term)
✓ Alger J. Tormoehlen
Florissant, Mo.

(4 year term)
✓ Henry Bergman
Manistee, Mich.

BOARD OF CONTROL, ST PAUL

=====

Laymen

✓ Harold Bartz
Alexandria, Minn.

✓ Lorenz Degner
Richfield, Minn.

Teachers

✓ Arnold W. Lohse
St. Paul, Minn.

BOARD OF CONTROL, SELMA

=====

Pastors

- ✓ Charles L. Graeber
Prattville, Ala.

Laymen

- ✓ Inez A. Parker
Philadelphia, Pa.

Teachers

- ✓ Mary A. McBride
Montgomery, Ala.

BOARD OF CONTROL, SEWARD

=====

Laymen

- ✓ Walter W. Niemann
Staplehurst, Neb.
- ✓ Ralph H. Skov
Holyoke, Colo.
- ✓ *Dr. David Krohn
Seward, Kansas

Teachers

- ✓ *William Chandler
Grand Island, Nebraska

BOARD OF CONTROL, SPRINGFIELD

=====

Pastors

- ✓ William H. B. Fehl
St. Louis, Mo.
- ✓ Willard E. Niederbrach
Muncie, Ind.

Laymen

- ✓ (2 year term)
E. Dean Niedan
North Platte, Neb.

(4 year term)

- ✓ John D. Biesemeier
Mt. Pulaski, Ill.

- ✓ Earl Boucher
Jacksonville, Ill.

Teachers

- ✓ H. James Boldt
West Allis, Wis.

BOARD OF CONTROL, WINFIELD

=====

Laymen

- ✓ Donald Neff
Deerfield, Kansas
- ✓ A. H. Wipperman
Topeka, Kansas

BOARD OF CONTROL, PORTO ALEGRE,

=====

BRAZIL

=====

Pastors

- ✓ Norberto C. Ott

Laymen

- ✓ *Johannes Engel

BOARD OF CONTROL, SAO LEOPOLDO,

=====

BRAZIL

=====

Laymen

- ✓ Herbert Liechti
Porto Alegre, Brazil

* Write in Candidate

THE OPENING SERMON

There was much, much that was beautiful and beneficial in the opening sermon.

The benefits of the opening sermon were many. But the emphasis seemed to peak and point toward an ecumenical view that has proved to be less than effective in many denominations that are EBBING in evangelism and church extension when the major thrust of the sermon was to focus on the need for a FLOW of expanding the mission given by CHRIST to His church. We would not want to detract from the many beneficial aspects of Dr. Bernthal's sermon. So, at the point where his sermon made a telling climax, we would add some words to his spoken text and thereby, we submit, add a Bible-based dimension to his excellent admonition:

"Don't drive people out (WITH HUMANISM): bring people in (WITH HIS INSPIRED, INERRANT AND EVERLASTING WORD)."

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4040 West Fond du Lac Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53216

FIGHTING RACISM

Resolution 4-03, "To Combat Racism", is a timely proposal. Recalling some of the church's past efforts in this area, the resolution takes honest stock of our progress and concludes: "In spite of all our Christian resolves and attempts to combat racism the church has fallen short of its objectives."

In light of this situation, 4-03 calls for positive action based on God's Word. It notes that the ministry exists "to equip the church and its people through the Word for every work that is good." Further, it identifies racism as "a sin, completely contrary to the Word of God" and Jesus' command to "love one another even as He has loved us."

The resolution calls upon each pastor to search his own heart for personal prejudices, confess any such sin before God, and, in his Word oriented pastoral activities, "equip God's people to affirm the worth and value of people of all races." Thus, he and the congregation he serves will be united in developing "Christ-centered interpersonal programs for attitudinal changes in an effort to banish racism from the church and society."

Finally, the proposal commends the Board of Social Ministry and World Relief and urges it to continue its work within the limits of existing budget and personnel.

Certainly this resolution deserves full support from the Convention and the Synod's congregations.

Ken Schurb
Gretna, La.

Convention Issue
Anaheim, Calif.

No. 2

July 6, 1975

"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13



P R E S I D E N T I A L A D D R E S S

Dr. Preus' presidential address reaffirmed for the convention Missouri's solid theological basis with Jesus Christ as Lord and Head of the church. As a part of His church, Missouri's delegates are at Anaheim to review its past two years and to lay plans for its future.

Calling on the convention to be "calm and fair and loving but firm," Dr. Preus showed those same qualities in laying before the convention some major decisions which face the delegates. Voicing general approval of the floor committee resolutions, he expressed his confidence in the convention's ability to "take actions which will go a long way towards solving" the major problems of Synod.

Pointing to a 20-year development of "two opposing theologies" on the doctrine of Holy Scripture, Dr. Preus asserted that to teach the Bible contained errors "not only dishonors God who has given us His Word, but also makes the solution of doctrinal problems absolutely impossible."

Seminex students, he said, are to be dealt with in fairness and love but "no organization can permit those who apply for admission to dictate the terms of their admission." A fair

evaluation of the Seminex professors' doctrinal position was also proposed.

The disobedience of a small number of district presidents led Dr. Preus to remind all synodical and district officers that when Synod speaks, "her servants either agree to perform their duties in keeping with the will of the Synod, or remove themselves from office."

With reference to ELIM, Dr. Preus recognized the value of proper dissent but also pointed out that those who cannot live in conformity with Synod's doctrinal position must finally "try to find a church home in which they can live with greater happiness."

After suggesting laudable and attainable goals in the areas of evangelism, missions, and stewardship, Dr. Preus voiced his conviction that the Missouri Synod wants three things: purity of doctrine, peace, and progress.

Affirm shares that conviction. Under God's blessings both the convention and the Synod can look forward to gains toward those goals!

YOUTH -- ONE WITH ALL?

(7-09 AND AMENDED 7-04)

So often we are caught up in the spirit of our times. It is natural for our youth to develop a kinship with others. These friendships affect all human relationships as well as their relationships with other Christians of other churches.

However, our relationship with each other in our Synod is a responsible relationship. We believe, teach and confess the same truths according to God's Holy Word. We have a responsibility to each other, an obligation to support the teachings which we have been brought to believe, by God the Holy Spirit.

We are One Church with a single one doctrinal stance. Our fellowship with each other as Lutheran Christians is a free and mutual agreement. Moreover, our church is a confessional church. Its position is most openly evident, in the eyes of the public, in its practice of public worship -- also in the public worship of our youth. If we worship with those with whom we have no official fellowship, we will give the false impression that we are one in our beliefs with others not in fellowship with us. In effect, in such worship we declare that our differences, according to God's Word, are not important. This denies the conviction we profess in our Confessions as Lutheran Christians. Consensus on the basics of Christianity does not mean that we are confessionally one.

Resolution 7-09 is not in accord with our Synodical Confessional stance.

However, at the heart of the congregation and near the bosom of the Savior, our youth must be equipped

as a vibrant, active group in each parish's total ministry. The enlisting and usage of their dedicated time and talents help them to serve their Savior and their fellowman.

To aid in this effort International Youth Gatherings of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod have, in the past, proved to be an important bond in strengthening spiritual fellowship and mutual Christian labors. Affirm supports the resumption of such gatherings on the Synodical and District levels.

Affirm urges the support of our people for this cause and, therefore, the support of resolution 7-04 as amended.

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CLARIFY CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

The committee, created in 1973 at New Orleans, to study Missouri's Constitution, Bylaws, and Organization has reported that it didn't complete its work and that a piecemeal approach to the problem assigned to it has proven unsatisfactory.

It therefore recommended that this convention create a Task Force to study these matters and the tentative recommendations made by the Joint Committee on Reorganization and Constitution Review.

The floor committee recommends this basic concept and adds language which Affirm applauds, "That the task force preserve the congregational polity of church government which has served our Synod in its

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history and avoid the centralization of power within the synodical structure..."

These and other matters pertaining to this Task Force will be found in floor committee resolution 5-01. Affirm understands that an amendment to 5-01 will be offered which will give the Board of Directors, Synod's Praesidium, and the Council of Presidents the authority to appoint the members of the proposed Task Force.

For a variety of reasons, Affirm believes that this arrangement is more satisfactory than the resolution as it appears in Today's Business and urges the adoption of the amended 5-01.

A FINE STEP FORWARD

Resolution 4-10 is most commendable and natural. Missouri's magazine, Advance, has the purpose of providing program aids and ideas to the congregations and their leadership in the LCMS. It also provides program information from Synod's leaders of parish services.

Many fine programs and ideas, developed in the field, have been and will continue to be shared via Advance throughout Synod. In this way the fruits of practical experience in spreading the Gospel are widely disseminated.

To place the Advance Editorial Commission under the Division of Parish Service is a commonsense step. Affirm looks forward to it.

Your approval will be signified by your vote in favor of 4-10.

A P L E A F O R S E L F - D I S C I P L I N E

Resolution 5-06 responds to the growing concern in Synod over the imbalance that is evolved in the exercise of rights on the one hand to the submersion of responsibilities on the other.

There has never been a serious question raised as to the rights of a congregation to call a pastor of its choosing. In a confessional church body such as LC-MS, this right is established in Scriptures, undergirded in the Confessions, and protected in the Constitution and bylaws of Synod.

But responsibilities are also ordained. The admonition for establishing decent and orderly procedures in man's secular as well as religious organizations is Biblical.

Therefore, the references in resolution 5-06 to Article VI of the Constitution and sections 4.01 and 4.15 of the bylaws are not detours into the fuzzy land of legalism. Rather these are orderly reminders that both rights and responsibilities are rooted in God's Word. To ignore the latter is to abuse the former.

While the preamble gently but firmly points to areas in our Handbook that include such an ultimate disciplinary action -- even of expulsion -- the tone of this resolution remains loving. And the focus is not on inflicting punishment, but rather on inviting self discipline.

When congregations voluntarily join the Synod, a great number of benefits and rights are immediately theirs. But these are joined with responsibilities. When and if congregations choose to ignore the rules, procedures and practices of their chosen fellowship, they force their Synod to invoke those rules. Were Synod to ignore or condone the breaking of bylaws by a few, the rights, privileges and expectations of the vast majority would then suffer.

The Convention will do well to retain the firm reminders in the preamble and yet continue the thrust which is entrained in the single "resolved": It is truly a loving plea for self-discipline.

DEALING WITH SEMINEX GRADUATES

Delegates will have to decide what action to take with respect to resolution 5-05, "To Declare the Ineligibility of Unendorsed Seminex Graduates for Ordination and Pastoral Ministry in the Missouri Synod (T.B., p.104). The resolution makes a lengthy introductory statement regarding the right to ordain in our church. A single "Whereas" states simply that we have "Unendorsed graduates of Seminex" who have not met the requirements for service as pastors in the Synod.

Two resolves of the resolution deals with the issue, but Affirm feels that they might probably be interpreted in greater detail.

The first resolve seeks to declare that the unendorsed graduates remain "ineligible for ordination and pastoral ministry..." while the second resolve asks the graduates to seek proper endorsement through the proper Synodical channels.

Affirm feels this fine resolution assumes that Synod expects these graduates to repent of their presumptuous criticisms of the entire Synod. Qualification to the pastoral ministry within our church should by all means include sorrow over the distress these students have caused by rejecting the ministerial training designed for their benefit which they judged to be inappropriate.

THE SEARCH FOR UNITY

As President Preus said in his report to the convention, "Resolution 3-01, 'To Seek Unity,' brings to us some very positive and helpful proposals for both solving the doctrinal problems which still exist and for strengthening us in our faith and adding to our understanding of God's Holy Word."

In the third chapter of Revelation verse 8, Christ Himself tells the church at Philadelphia "that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and not denied my name."

Notice the twin accents of both President Preus' Report and the message of Revelation. We keep the Holy Word of God through an increased understanding of it and we do not deny His name by being strengthened in our faith. These two accents of purity of doctrine and evangelism zeal exist insofar as we are nurtured often by God's Word and sacraments.

In both keeping and proclaiming His Word the Holy Spirit produces a bond of unity which Satan and his angels, let alone men, cannot separate. Thus, this resolution accurately emphasizes the fact that true unity or concord "can only come as we study God's Word under the guidance of the Holy Spirit."

Insofar as we refrain from "fostering and providing for ongoing theological education through institutes, seminars, and other means, "we lose the means by which God through His Word enters our hearts. What better way to sustain the twin emphases of conservatism and evangelism than to encourage the Board of Directors to authorize the expenditures of the necessary funds for the work of the Committee on Theology and Church Re-

lations (CTCR) in promoting these institutes and seminars. As President Preus stated: "I would urge your very careful study of this resolution and hope that it will meet with the favorable reaction of the convention."

TERMINATING THE COMMISSION ON MISSION AND MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH

There are three reasons why the Board of Directors of Synod desires to terminate the Commission On Mission and Ministry in the Church. First, it has indeed served its purpose of seeing to it that the Mission Affirmations would be disseminated and applied.

Secondly, the Board is of the conviction that the development of new means of mission and ministry is and should be the ongoing creative responsibility of all boards and commissions in the Synod and should not be delegated away to any special group.

Thirdly, since the Bylaws state that the Commission's recommendations are to be made to the Board of Directors for implementation of such counsel and suggestions, it is interesting to note that it is the Board of Directors itself that recommends the termination of this commission on mission and ministry in the Church.

Affirm urges support of 4-11 on this matter!

LEADERS MUST LEAD AND FOLLOW

LC-MS has many leaders. At all levels there are elected, hired, appointed and called persons who fill very responsible positions in Synod. Positions of leadership.

For some years it has become increasingly evident that many of these leaders have been pulling us in different directions. Some of these directions were incompatible. As a result there have been inevitable confrontations and disputes. We have almost become a house divided rather than a Synod "walking together".

Resolution 5-02 is aimed at the confounding and confusing situation that has resulted in having leaders who have varied notions as to their roles in Synod. Because of these varied notions and the resulting various actions taken by, authorized by, recognized by or condoned by some of the District Presidents, this resolution is a very firm one.

Firmness is needed. For, we have before us a constitutional crisis. Affirm feels that it is appropriate to quote from an open letter that was written by a congregation (in Cincinnati, Ohio) on this subject.

The quote comes from a letter written to Dr. Preus with copies going to the Committee on Constitutional Matters:

"Like all of our problems, the constitutional crisis can only be solved by using the Bible as our only rule and norm. Our fathers reminded us in the Confessions--Luther's explanations of the Fourth and Eighth Commandments in the Small and Large Catechisms are particularly germane--that we would have problems if we did not use all of Scriptures for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16). In more recent times our Synod,

following the lead of our fathers and the admonition of Paul to do things decently and in order, has passed doctrinal resolutions and established

bylaws which speak to our current problems. It is time, we believe, to see to it that the officials who have patently and clearly disobeyed authority and have failed to carry out the duties of their several offices either recant, resign or be suspended."

Affirm is inclined to agree that suspensions of some of these district presidents is probably overdue. In another letter -- this one addressed to the Chairman of the Committee on Constitutional Matters and sent also to others -- this congregation had these comments:

"The fifty or so overtures which begin at 5-96A and run through 5-139E have a similar thrust. We are concerned, however, at the prolonged delay at resolving the crucial issue of removing false teaching and false teachers from the pulpits, lecterns, publications and other offices and channels which are even now continuing to confound and confuse our brethren. There is attached our congregation's views on this most serious matter. As you will note, we are advocating suspension now of those officials who are continuing an unrepentant posture on matters (such as the ordination of Seminex pastors) on which our church has clearly and repeatedly expressed its positions. This is not simply a matter of justice; delayed is injustice prolonged. We are reminded by no less than Luther that public sin needs public rebuke."

Affirm believes that a considerable injustice has already been perpetrated upon our Synod by having justice so long delayed.

(continued to page 7)

THE FORMER FACULTY MAJORITY

The doctrinal position of the faculty majority at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, was condemned by Synod at New Orleans (Res. 3-09) and was turned over to the school's Board of Control for the necessary personal interviews to determine the doctrinal stance of each member of the faculty majority.

Since the faculty walkout removed these faculty members from the Board of Control's jurisdiction, the status of these people and, more importantly, their doctrinal position, has remained unresolved.

Synod is now asked to deal with this matter in two similar resolutions offered by floor committees #3 and #5 (3.03 and 5-04).

Resolution 5-04 suggests that "a committee of pastors and laymen," appointed by the president of Synod, shall conduct the interviews and report to the synodical president. He, in turn, shall "deal pastorally with each member" in conjunction with the respective district presidents.

Resolution 3-03 specifies the make-up of such an interview committee.

LEADERS

(continued from page 6)

Yet, Resolution 5-02 remains a desired and a desirable resolution for the convention to adopt. It will give yet another opportunity for those leaders who have chosen to lead in many directions which are not of Synod's choosing but of their own, yet one more chance. For leaders must learn to follow as well as to lead.

Synod certainly will wish to consider these two resolutions simultaneously.

The former faculty members have repeatedly complained that their status is in limbo. Either resolution or a combination of the two provides former faculty members with the needed opportunity to declare unequivocally their agreement with the doctrinal position of Synod.

SEMINARY PROFS AS

ASSISTANT PASTORS

Resolution 5-07 (TB, p.106) is a fair and firm solution to the continuing problem of those congregations which call Seminex professors for the sole purpose of keeping them on the roster of Synod. The Resolved is clear: that those persons called by congregations to be Seminex profs and/or who are already Seminex profs can be retained on the roster only as candidates on a renewable annual basis.

Bylaw 4.33 is specific in pointing out those duties that a pastor must be performing to be retained on the roster. Particular application to these cases is that one may be called to serve as a parish pastor or as an instructor in an institution recognized by Synod. (emphasis ours). Actions by congregations in the Seminex situation meet neither of these requirements.

Resolution 5-07 applies the provision of annual review of status by the District President to the situation at hand. Such action is eminently correct and is urgently needed at this time.

PREXY PRESS CONFERENCE

Dr. J. A. O. Preus told a large press conference Friday night that his chief hopes for the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, as a result of the 51st regular convention, are the creation of a better climate in the Synod and the opportunity to give its members a time to cool down and let emotions subside.

In response to repeated efforts by media people to draw him into making some statement about controversial issues, the synodical president reasserted essentially the contents of his opening presidential message.

On the issue of ELIM, Dr. Preus said, "We do not want to do anything to drive these dear brothers out of the church, but when they set up an organization, establish a budget, support a seminary (Seminex), develop their own mission program, and seek financial support from members of the

Synod, then I have to agree with the floor committee when they say that ELIM is 'schismatic'."

Replying to questions regarding a possible split in Synod, Dr. Preus stated, "Laymen are much more loyal to the Synod than many pastors realize. Twice in the last 30 years there have been attempts to split off from Synod but only a handful have left. There have been absolutely no pastors or congregations who have left Synod in the last biennium. In fact, three pastors have left FAL and were readmitted to Synod at the last meeting of the Council of Presidents."

Several questions were raised regarding Dr. John Tietjen, but Dr. Preus refused to be drawn into them. Asked if he held Dr. Tietjen guilty of false doctrine, Dr. Preus responded that he did not think it proper to discuss the case which is still in process.

THE PRESIDENT AND THE COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS

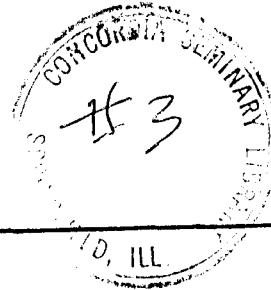
As in any large organization, so in Synod there is an ongoing need to clarify relationships between officers, boards and commissions.

Prior to New Orleans, there was a definite move to alter completely the traditional functions of the Council of Presidents. Even though no such radical move is apparent at this convention, the Council of Presidents has shown a tendency to show an interest in matters not assigned to it by

Synod. Therefore, clarification of the relationship between the president of Synod and the Council of Presidents is very much in order and is offered in Resolution 5-03. The resolution makes use of New Orleans Resolution 5-21, which was not acted upon because of a lack of time. The suggested new Bylaw section 3.53 is brief and clear. It achieves the necessary clarification. It should require very little discussion, but its adoption is important.



Convention Issue
Anaheim, Calif.
No. 3
July 7, 1975



"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13

RECEIVED

JUL 28 1975

EIGHT DISTRICT PRESIDENTS GIVEN THEIR LAST CHANCE

Sunday afternoon the Anaheim Convention began its debate on one of the crucial resolutions on which it must reach a decision this week.

The resolution itself, on which Affirm has previously commented, seems simple enough: the eight district presidents, who improperly authorized the ordination of Seminec candidates, are asked by the floor committee either to follow proper procedures or, if they cannot "in good conscience" do this, to resign or be dealt with by the Synodical President in a procedure clearly outlined by the resolution.

Before the actual debate on this simple and clear issue could get under way, the Chairman of the Council of Presidents requested postponement of the debate until after a Monday evening meeting of the Council of Presidents in order to give this group the opportunity to work for an alternate solution.

The Chairman, Pastor Wilbert Griesse of the Mid-South District, stated: "The Council of Presidents has failed in its regular meeting to resolve this particular issue. A meeting was held last night with most of the ... members of the Council of Presidents there. The request has come that I re-

quest the convention to postpone decision on this matter until one more meeting of the Council of Presidents can be held."

The debate on this matter lasted a considerable time. President Karl Barth of the South Wisconsin District later asked for a point of personal privilege and made the following statement, "The previous speaker mentioned a meeting of the Council of Presidents last night. I only want to say to the assembly that that report is not factual.. There was no meeting of the Council of Presidents last evening. I was told informally at a meeting yesterday afternoon (some of them part of the Council of Presidents?) to get together. I was told 'Pass the word around.'"

"Of the eight men on the Council that I have asked, seven said that they were not there and several said they had never heard of that meeting. Therefore, any report that there was a resolution of the Council of Presidents is in error.

"What is more important and I think that it is in fairness to the eight Council of President members -- my brothers on the

(Continued on Page 8)

TO CLARIFY STATUS OF SEMINEX GRADUATES

President Preus in his Report stated that this resolution dealing with uncertified Seminex graduates is "eminently fair and loving." He spoke of the difficulties of having Synod know whether these uncertified Seminex graduates are "doctrinally sound according to the Scriptures and the Confessions...No organization can permit those who apply for admission to dictate the terms of their admission. This the Synod reserves for itself."

By encouraging uncertified Seminex graduates "to request admission to the pastoral ministry of the Synod by making their desire known to the Colloquy Board for the Pastoral Office," Resolution 6-05 provides a method for Seminex graduates to act Scripturally in a decent and orderly manner.

Committee Five also deals in a loving yet firm manner with Seminex graduates in Resolution 5-05. This resolution declares that because of improper certification and endorsement, these students remain "ineligible for the pastoral ministry in the Synod." It is indeed important that both these resolutions be passed. First, the Synod needs to stand firmly yet fairly on a method whereby those who desire to enter the pastoral ministry may do so in a decent and orderly manner. Secondly, the Synod needs to afford those students caught up in the crisis of January 1974 the opportunity to enter the pastoral ministry of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod in keeping with the doctrinal stance and bylaws of Synod.

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WE BELIEVE, THEREFORE LET US SPEAK!

Once again A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles is before a synodical convention. This year Missouri's Floor Committee 3 has distilled the various resolutions (pro and con) on A Statement into 3-05, listed on pages 47-48 of Today's Business. The punch line of the Resolution is in its last Resolve "That the Synod reaffirm that A Statement is in accord with the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, and contains nothing contrary to them and is in accord with the doctrinal position of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod as it has been taught historically and expressed in the official doctrinal statements of the Synod".

As we read the resolution, it provides an opportunity to confess our faith through the reaffirmation of this magnificent doctrinal statement. At the same time it provides a means for orderly dissent by those who object to it.

We enthusiastically urge you to support this resolution. The Scripture says: "I believe; therefore, I have spoken". Let's confess our faith by giving this resolution the big majority it deserves! Certainly we do not wish to bind consciences in a legalistic way, but when Synod adopted A Statement at New Orleans (3-01), it did so joyfully and from the deep conviction that it says what the Bible says on the issues! We are reminded of the seminary professor who said, "If my President would tell me that I could teach whatever I wanted to today, I wouldn't change a thing! I teach what I now want."

3-05 reaffirms that A Statement teaches nothing contrary to the Scriptures and our Lutheran Confessions. Let those who dissent demonstrate where it does!

OUR SOCIAL MINISTRY

(Res. 8-03 to 8-06)

As we continue to wrestle with doctrinal concerns in this convention, there is a great danger that we become so involved with them that we overlook other important concerns, such as our Social Ministry. True, the feeding of the soul is of primary importance, but persons who are physically starving or under great political and racial oppression are not likely to be overly interested in the Gospel message.

For this reason we bring to your attention Resolutions 8-03 through 8-06, dealing with vital social issues connected with the spread of the Gospel.

The problem of hunger, brought about by drought and crop failure, has reached worldwide crisis proportions. Resolution 8-03 addresses itself to world hunger, starvation, and malnutrition, and a sympathetic attitude toward the hungry is contained in this commendable resolution.

Not only hunger, but also oppression because of race or political status, also hinders the proclamation of the Gospel. Two resolutions address themselves to these problems. Resolution 8-04 calling attention to the blacks (many of them Lutherans) in Namibia, South Africa, suffering severe racial oppression; and Resolution 8-05 asking our support for those Christians currently under severe persecution by Communist rulers. Again, we sympathize with both groups, the victims of apartheid rule and of Communist rule. That the Gospel may not be hindered among these people because of their plight, we favor adoption of both resolutions.

Finally, we urge adoption of Resolution 8-06, "To Expand Project Compassion." This project has captured the imagination and support of thousands, in and outside of the Synod, as more than 12,000 volunteers are active in prisons, nursing homes, and countless other institutions for the sick and the aging making friendly visits in the name of the Christ who said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. 25:40).

All four of these resolutions dealing with social concerns are intimately connected with our first and foremost purpose of bringing the good news of salvation through faith in God's Son, our only Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and should be approved by this convention.

FELLOWSHIP WITH AUSTRALIA

Fellowship based on unity in confessions has always been a Lutheran hallmark. Even today our Spirit-wrought desire to teach and confess "the whole counsel of God," together with our determination that "The Gospel be preached in conformity with a pure understanding of it" (AC VII 2; German) in every place, moves us to responsible ecumenical endeavors.

A case in point is Resolution 3-02, "To Reaffirm the Desire to Establish Fellowship with The Lutheran Church of Australia." At this key moment in our Synod's life, we should heartily and prayerfully support this proposal and the Lutheran spirit that underlies it.

THE ELIM

At no time has the Synod outlawed or condemned proper dissent. In fact, the very opposite is true--the Synod in its By-laws made adequate provision for such proper dissent as it set up the channels by which such dissent could be aired. Bylaw 1.09 stipulates that a peer group first be approached by the dissenter, that then the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) is to study the matter, and that finally a convention of the Synod may have the matter before it by way of an overture. Three simple, but basic, steps to properly voice one's dissent against doctrinal positions of the Synod!

However, after the New Orleans convention such steps for voicing proper dissent were disregarded by a group within the Synod. Already in July 1973, just eleven days after the synodical convention had adjourned, the former "faculty majority" of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, totally ignored the due process for dissent of Bylaw 1.09 and issued a document titled, A Declaration of Protest and Confession, protesting and condemning several resolutions of the New Orleans convention, especially those declaring the former "faculty majority's" doctrinal stance to be false doctrine and supporting the Synod's right to issue doctrinal statements in time of doctrinal controversy.

Action came swiftly on the heels of this faculty document of protest, and on August 28-29, 1973, the group known as ELIM came into being at Chicago. This group specifically challenged New Orleans Resolution 2-12, 3-01, 3-09, and 3-12A as "errant actions" and said, "We declare null and void any attempt to make resolutions of men binding upon us." Instead of proper dissent, outright anarchy had set in.

In judging ELIM we must carefully note that the synodical Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) has ruled that the New Orleans resolutions denounced by ELIM are constitutional, pointing out that Resolution 3-09 rejected the former "faculty majority's" doctrinal stance, but did not condemn faculty members individually. The CCM also stated that the basis for judging the "faculty majority position" was Article II of the synodical Constitution.

Proper channels for dissent were available but ELIM and the former "faculty majority" chose to ignore them.

Events that followed the August 1973 founding of ELIM clearly demonstrated that it is far more than a confessional movement whose purpose is to convince the Synod that certain convention resolutions ought to be rescinded. We can enumerate five steps in ELIM's path of opposition to the Synod:

1. Not long after its founding ELIM began publishing a biweekly news paper, Missouri in Perspective, whose news articles and editorials have displayed a lack of factual reporting.

2. On May 10-11, 1974, an independent mission society, "Partners in Mission", was launched in opposition to the Board for Missions of the Synod and the mission program of the Synod.

3. A rival seminary was born that same spring, usurping the name "Concordia" and calling itself "Concordia Seminary in Exile" (Seminox).

4. In May, 1975 ELIM took a further step by announcing possible plans to establish its own teacher training program.

RESOLUTION

5. To fund this program of rebellious dissent a budget was established by ELIM and, contrary to Bylaw 2.85, c.2, funds were solicited from the congregations of Synod and an appeal was made that ELIM be included in the congregation's budget. Thus funds were siphoned off to support ELIM and its rival (or opposition) programs.

All of this did not go unnoticed in the Synod. On June 3, 1974, the synodical Board of Directors issued a four-page position statement in which it stated "the Board views the activities of ELIM as being divisive in the church (cf. Article III, synodical Constitution), and has the potential for division of the Synod." Note well -- "divisive" and "potential for division of the Synod." That's Synod's Board of Director's verdict about ELIM!

It did not in the least affect ELIM's course of opposition to the Synod. At the second ELIM assembly, in August 1974, the general manager of ELIM flatly and defiantly stated, "I am suggesting that we....ordain graduates of Concordia Seminary in Exile without looking to see what the reaction will be. Let them (the Synod) do what they will."

The purpose of Resolution 3-06 is to call attention to the fact that the time has come to put an end to the anarchy spawned and practiced by ELIM: Setting up a competing seminary; improperly calling and ordaining its uncertified graduates into the ministry of the Synod; establishing a competing missionary program; encouraging congregations to withhold financial support from the Synod; and now proposing an alternate teacher education program.

ELIM is schismatic. ELIM violates the first object of the Synod, "The conservation and promotion of the unity of the true faith and a united defense against schism and sectarianism."

Resolution 3-06 addresses itself to this festering sore in the Synod and deserves the support of all loyal members of the Synod.

The great "anguish and regret" which 3-06 expresses is real. Much as we may deplore the necessity of the steps it calls for, the resolution should be passed.

DEALING WITH SEMINEX

Ever since Seminex came into existence in February 1974 after the faculty-student walkout at our St. Louis Seminary, there have been many informal suggestions for dealing with the problem. Some of these unsolicited suggestions have been quite interesting, but most of them have been unrealistic.

The simple fact is that Seminex is incorporated as a legal entity in the state of Missouri, and Synod has no control over the legal existence of any corporation outside of its own framework.

With this in mind, Synod has only two things it can do. First, since Seminex involves fellow Missouri Synod Lutherans and their competitive educational venture, Synod can ask that Seminex dissolve itself for the sake of peace and harmony in our Synod. Secondly, if Seminex rejects this synodical plea, it needs to be regarded as any other non-synodical theological school.

Resolution 6-02 recognizes both facts.

SEMINEX AND THE "CONCORDIA" NAME

The name "Concordia" has long and honorable usage in the Missouri Synod, specifically also in the names of the seminaries operated under synodical auspices.

For the walk-out students and faculty to take the name "Concordia Seminary in Exile" strikes one as improper, if not morally wrong. In addition, according to competent attorneys who specialize in patents and trade names, this usage is illegal.

All of this has been called to the attention of Seminex repeatedly both by the Seminary Board of Control and the synodical Board of Directors.

These repeated evangelical requests that Seminex chose another name have been received with evasion and rebuff, apparently to the point of disdain.

Resolution 6-06 may seem picay-unish to some, but Affirm views it as Synod's necessary insistence on its right to the name, "Concordia".

Editorial Policy

While the articles in *Affirm* with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

THE EDITORIAL GROUP

The Rev. William T. Eggers
Richard G. Korthals
Dr. Walter A. Maier
The Rev. Ewald J. Otto
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'SEEK AND YOU SHALL FIND'

An adventuring spirit blows throughout resolutions 2-03, 2-04, and 2-05. The Lord of the harvest sends His people into a whole world! In this world, God prepares men to receive the saving Gospel of Christ.

The essence of these three resolutions is to seek out the lost. Rightfully so! The lost, in their spiritual blindness, are not noted for seeking out Christ. "How shall they hear, unless a preacher is sent?"

It is proper to help where help is asked. Sister churches, mission areas, special ministries should have the help Synod's Mission Board can offer. This strengthens the weak and shares the burdens of soul winning.

The history of the Christian Church is, "They went everywhere preaching, the Word." The history of the LC-MS is the same. The LC-MS is noted for its aggressive promotion of the Gospel of Christ. The mission outreach of the LC-MS must do likewise.

Pray that the Lord of the harvest will motivate us to seek the lost! Rest assured, we shall find them. For an aggressive mission policy in the LC-MS, administered and implemented by the LC-MS Board of Missions, your vote for resolutions 2-03, 2-04, 2-05 is needed.

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SYNOD'S DOCTRINAL STATEMENTS

God's Word alone establishes doctrine. But any group of Christians can and, indeed, must say whether they are agreed on what they hear God's Word to be saying. To deny that right would be to deny the right of existence to the Lutheran Confessions!

Similarly, our own Missouri Synod came into being with a group of people deciding that they agreed to a given doctrinal platform.

Later, as doctrinal controversies arose from time to time in our long history, Synod has repeatedly adopted doctrinal statements and has reasserted its right to do so.

As recently as the 1973 convention, in a highly significant action, Synod declared such statements to be the official expression of its will and faith. Resolution 3-04 affords Anaheim delegates still another opportunity to reassert this principle, basic to the continued existence of a confessional church body.

The unchangeable Word of God outlines all errors and heresies. But as long as aberrations confront and afflict Christians, they must bear witness to the truth in every age. The church has the privilege and responsibility, though fiercely opposed by Satan, to guard what has been entrusted to it. Bold confession and evangelical discipline are useful and God-pleasing tools in this struggle.

Of course, all dealings about doctrine must be conducted in brotherly fairness as well as in decency and good order. Resolution 3-04 proposes that a committee draft a proposed addition to the Handbook to clarify three areas which have caused concern for some and confusion for others. "The status of doctrinal statements as distinguished from the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confession; the procedures for adoption of such statements; the procedures for proper expression of dissent and possible revision."

Certainly this proposal, 3-04, emphasizing faithfulness to God and love for one another, is worthy of the Convention's favorable action.

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SEMINEX GRADS & THE COLLOQUY

Res. 6-04 has a dry title ("To Re-vise Colloquy Bylaws") followed by a forbidding two and one half pages of suggested new Bylaw language. But let no delegate be deterred by these facts from a careful reading of 6-04. There is in it both good news and bad news.

The good news: Happily, the suggested revisions simplify the route into the LC-MS ministry for men over the age of 40. Also, since special ministries require special men, one is equally cheered by the interest shown toward bringing into pastorates college-level men "who belong to a special ethnic or linguistic group." In general, the resolution properly updates our Synod's colloquy route into the ministry.

But there is bad news: For some reason not clear to Affirm the floor committee muddies the waters with its final "resolve" (TB, p. 133, Points 1 and 2) which injects the question of separate procedures to be followed by those 1974, 1975, and 1976 Seminex graduates, who may show an interest in serving Missouri Synod congregations. This matter should have been treated in a separate resolution. However, since it is there, Affirm offers a simple solution. Replace points 1 and 2 of the second "resolve" with the following:

"RESOLVED,

1. That Seminex graduates be encouraged to apply for entrance into the LC-MS ministry via the colloquy route.

2. That the colloquy board be encouraged to give special consideration to reducing the normal requirements for those Seminex graduates who apply for entrance into the colloquy program prior to December 31, 1975."

Affirm hopes that a floor amendment of this nature will simplify this matter.

PRESIDENTS (Continued from Page 1)

Council who stand as the Chairman said, 'under indictment' that these men did not ask for that meeting nor have they asked for any delay nor have they indicated any change in their stand with reference to that report.

"I have no objection to the delay. But I only advise that the convention be made known of the facts and that any false impressions may be erased. In my judgment it is this kind of confusion that has through the years made the resolution of our difficulties even more difficult."

Many delegates apparently were confused by the events of this episode and by the contradictory information they received.

As closely as Affirm can determine, an informal meeting of some district presidents did occur on Saturday night

Affirm agrees with Dr. Barth that the delay on this issue is not objectionable. The eight dissenting district presidents do now have an opportunity for a final reconsideration of the stand they have taken concerning Seminex students and other matters.

Affirm hopes and prays that at their Monday evening meeting all eight will fully accept the provisions of the first four resolutions of 5-02A and promise immediately faithfully to adhere to them.

The Anaheim convention can accept no less than such a determination on their part. If they consent fully and without reservation to these provisions, the remainder of 5-02A would prove unnecessary.

If one or more of these eight district presidents does not consent to these resolutions, 5-02A should be passed by the convention in its entirety and fully applied to them.

The LC-MS can settle for no less!



Convention Issue
Anaheim, Calif.
No. 4
July 8, 1975

"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13

RECEIVED

JUL 28 1975

THE ENGLISH DISTRICT

One of this convention's major resolutions is Res. 4-02 which calls for the dissolution of the English District. It is scheduled for debate on Tuesday afternoon.

From a purely practical point of view, several facts are indisputable. First, the very existence of an "English" District in our Synod in 1975 is unintelligible. This is clearly evident to anyone who has tried to explain to any outsider (and some insiders) what the "English District" is.

Second, when the "English Synod" became the "English District" of the Missouri Synod in 1911, the Articles of Union expressed the hope that the English congregations would join the respective geographical districts "in the very near future". This assumed temporary existence of a language district is indicated by the fact that already in 1923, only 12 years after the original union, there was an overture before the synodical convention proposing amalgamation of the English District into the geographical districts.

However, such practical considerations have a tendency to fade before the emotion-charged question regarding the dissolution of a group originally formed in the late 1800's and a district of our Synod since 1911.

Additional legal overtones have been added to the already complex picture by one of the English District regional vice-presidents who has addressed a communication to Floor Committee #4 in which he claims that if Resolution 4-02 is passed English District members "will have grounds either to initiate or to resist legal action within the courts...." The legal factors apparently may be grouped under several questions;

1. Is the English District actually a "district" of the Missouri Synod? Yes, the documentation is clear and we know of no one who has questioned the "district" status of the English District.

2. May Synod dissolve a district without the cooperation and permission of the district? The answer is yes. By-Law 3.03 clearly spells out the conditions under which a district may be dissolved by the Synod. That By-Law nowhere indicates that the action must be bilateral. There has been a constant repetition of the idea that a dissolution move must be initiated by the English District. The statement is not true.

3. What about the 1911 Articles of Union under which the English Synod became the Missouri Synod's

(Continued on Page 11)

FORMER FACULTY MEMBERS

(3-03A)

Affirm endorses without equivocation Resolution 3-03A captioned, To Respond to Concerns Regarding Former Faculty Members in the form presented by the Committee. Committee #3 has offered an evangelical approach consistent with proper synodical doctrinal supervision in dealing with a vexing problem.

Reflected in the floor debate on this commendable resolution was the oft-repeated falsehood that the pre-New Orleans Board of Control cleared all the professors of charges of false doctrine. The plain, stark facts are that the pre-New Orleans Board of Control said:

"Since the Fact Finding Committee Report, on the basis of which the board was to take action, specifically disclaims any judgmental function, and since the board therefore did not have before it charges of false doctrine against any faculty member, the Board did not consider the interview process to be an investigation of charges of false teaching. Rather it considered the interviews to be fraternal discussions...." (emphasis supplied)

Affirm also reminds the delegates that the clarion call of the trumpet sounded very clearly in the New Orleans Convention Resolution 3-09 in its condemnation of specific false doctrine not to be tolerated in the church of God. It is suggested that any professor having transcript extracts appearing in the Report of the Synodical President (Blue Book) could easily have stated what extract (identified by letter) was his and released the entire transcript as well as the summary of the interview by the Board of Control. We raise the question why, if every professor was as clean as the proverbial "hounds tooth," did not all of those "maligned" pro-

fessors release to the church the entire transcript and summary and why were not tape recordings of interview by the Board of Control made as requested by some Board Members.

Bear in mind that on June 5, 1974, these professors in an open letter said,

"But what our two documents, Faithful...I and II, do teach, that we still stand by, personally and collectively. So we beg you, do not ask again, 'Yes, but whose teaching is that?' It is ours. If after that you still insist on condemning the teaching, then please accept the responsibility of condemning us as well." (Underlining added)

Let us not fall victim to those who attempt to create confusion.

On January 21, 1974, the student body of Concordia Seminary adopted a Student Resolution referring to certain language found in New Orleans Resolution 3-09 stating certain teaching was "not to be tolerated in the Church of God." These students then solicited a public declaration as to "which members of the faculty, if any, are to be considered as false teachers...." The students thereby clearly recognized not only the validity and the propriety of New Orleans Resolution 3-09 but also recognized the fact that false doctrine had indeed been taught and tolerated at this Seminary.

Before this convention is the only available avenue, Resolution 3-03A, to remove any "cloud" affecting those professors who left the Seminary. The avenue proposed indeed is "walking the extra mile." We urge the convention to "walk the extra mile" and overwhelmingly pass this resolution.

ALC, LCA, AND LCUSA:

LOW KEYED ISSUES AT MISSOURI CONVENTION (3-12 AND 3-13)

Past fellowship issues which rocked Missouri Synod in previous conventions will not rock the Anaheim convention. Resolutions are being presented by the floor committee to the convention to continue fellowship with The American Lutheran Church and membership with The Lutheran Council, U.S.A. Fellowship, declared with the ALC in 1969 at the Denver Convention, has remained a troublesome issue in the Missouri Synod since its declaration. Though the Synod is being asked to maintain fellowship with the ALC, the Synod will be asked to give a very careful and detailed study to this arrangement. Many have pointed out that continued fellowship with the ALC would be in direct conflict with the Synod's CTCR's paper Stance on Ecumenism. The resolution on LCUSA calls for Missouri's Board of Directors to evaluate Synod's participation in various programs of LCUSA on the basis of the Synod's fellowship principles.

ELIM has claimed that it has had close association with the ALC and the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), a sister church of the ALC. The ELIM faction has openly discussed the probability of declaring fellowship with the ALC. In the event of a split in the Missouri Synod, if ELIM or its paper church body, Lutheran Church in Mission (LCM), negotiates a fellowship arrangement with the ALC, it would be recognized that fellowship between the Missouri Synod and the ALC would no longer be possible.

Side issues involve discussion with the LCA and the establishment of one Lutheran Church for all of Canada.

Any discussions with the LCA have been further complicated by the arrangement that the Lutheran School of Theology has with Seminex, the ELIM seminary, in awarding Seminex graduates their degrees and diplomas. The Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago is affiliated with the LCA. The LCA at its last general convention censured the Missouri Synod for its doctrinal controversy. LCA officials have not appointed a committee to meet with Missouri Synod officials to discuss the motion of censure against the Missouri Synod. There seems to be little chance that the LCA and Missouri Synod will engage in doctrinal discussions regardless of any decision of the Anaheim convention.

S U P P O R T S Y N O D ' S M I S S I O N

The membership of Synod's congregations has the right to be assured that their consecrated offerings are being used to support Synod's mission efforts. To support the aims of ELIM's Partners In Mission program and at the same time to support Synod's aims in missions would be living in a house divided against itself. ELIM's Partners In Mission has the right to carry on its own work, but not in Missouri, if it does so with a different Scriptural and Confessional understanding from Missouri's. It is not good that the sister churches and mission fields become divided in doctrine and purpose. The two resolves of Resolution 2-11 express well Affirm's position. Your prayerful support of the resolution is invited!

HISTORICAL CRITICAL METHOD

It has been asserted in our Synod that "those who are called to teach the Bible may use whatever tools of research are available to help ascertain the message of the Scriptures."

Sounds good at first reading, but not so good when one realizes this is an argument for the use of the Historical-Critical Method of Bible study. It is difficult to obtain a concise definition of this method from Missourians who advocate its use. They speak of it as a "neutral tool" and say they use it "with Lutheran presuppositions." But is this method of Bible study really neutral?

First and foremost to a consideration of any method of Bible study is the question of whether it approaches the Bible as the inspired, inerrant Word of God, transmitted to the men who wrote it by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, so that the Scriptures are in all parts the Word of God. Or is the Bible to be examined as if it were a human book, subject to the limitations of human frailties? A basic concept of the Historical-Critical Method is a denial of the supernatural, of the miraculous. This means, simply stated, that the Spirit's connection with the Bible's origin (inspiration) is obscured, if not denied. Human factors and human limitations are made the norm of interpretation, so that under this method of Bible study, the Scriptures are virtually reduced to a product of mere human thought and experience. Gone is the doctrine that "holy men of God spoke (and wrote) as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

With this humanistic approach to the Bible it is only natural that the unity of the Bible is discounted and the age old basic principle that "the Bible interprets itself" is rendered

inoperative. Now, instead of the Bible being God's own inspired, inerrant, and authoritative Word, we are asked to consider the Holy Scriptures as any other human book, subject to human limitations of thought and experience.

The Historical-Critical Method is, therefore, not a "neutral tool." It begins with the premise that rules out the supernatural intervention of God's Spirit and makes of the Bible a mere human book.

The Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) has given intensive study to the problems raised by the use of the Historical-Critical Method in interpreting Scripture and has pointed out the grave dangers associated with it. Many of the false doctrines condemned already in New Orleans are the direct result of this destructive method of Bible interpretation.

The convention cannot be urged too strongly to support Resolution 3-11 which commends the CTCR position on the Historical-Critical Method.

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CAMPUS MINISTRIES

The Missions Committee has seriously considered the question of joint ministries and has provided Synod with two excellent resolutions on the subject.

Resolution 2-06 (TB, p.34) puts the opinion of the Commission on Constitutional Matters before Synod for ratification. It is clear that some ministries are being conducted in clear disregard of longstanding precepts of fellowship as defined in Scripture, the Confessions, and Synod's Constitution and Bylaws.

CCM's opinion is fair and loving. We recognize the need for co-operation with other Lutheran bodies in matters which are beneficial to all in so far as such co-operation does not extend to violation of fellowship principles. (Points 3,4 and 5 of the opinion spell this out clearly and concisely.)

The CCM opinion does not bring anything new to the picture, but simply re-affirms those principles which the Synod has always held.

Resolution 2-07 (TB, p.35) re-inforces 2-06 in logically following the guidelines of 2-06. The very subject, "To re-affirm..." is a sad commentary on existing conditions wherein Synod's position has not been honored.

The operative resolve of 2-07 is the third (line 68ff) -- that the achievement of doctrinal agreement and establishment of fellowship must precede joint involvement in matters directly pertaining to the ministry of Word and Sacrament or to matters directly affecting the doctrinal position of Synod.

The final resolveds must be viewed in relationship to this most important point. We must assume that Christian people will, in fact, consider the whole and not continue to let violations exist while discussing any "problems" that may be involved.

Re-affirmation of sound, long-standing positions is of paramount necessity at this time in Synod's life. Let Synod speak clearly and firmly in support of Resolutions 2-06 and 2-07.

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THE DISSIDENT DISTRICT PRESIDENTS

Last night the Council of Presidents once again met with the eight District Presidents who have been unrepentant in their violation of Synod's Constitution and By-Laws. This is the latest of repeated efforts to deal pastorally with these men during the past year. Although Affirm has already spoken to this issue (see July 6th issue), Affirm feels that the delegates should be aware of President Preus' masterful 28 page document presented to the Sept. 1974 Council of Presidents' meeting on the relationship between the Synodical President and the D.P.s with reference to their duties under the Constitution and By-Laws of the Synod. Dr. Preus wrote:

"The authorization to ordain uncertified men is not, therefore, simply an occasional deviation from certain By-Laws, but the strongest possible action needed to perpetuate a breakaway seminary, with all the freedom of theological varieties being espoused and absolutely no control of any kind on the part of the member congregations of Synod". (p. 26)

"Can any of us actually believe that the Synod in Convention will ever recognize as synodical institutions such schools whose leadership refuses to submit to an elected Board of Control and the Constitution and By-Laws of the Synod?" (p.27)

"However well-intended the authorization of uncertified men is, whatever appeals are made to a 'higher law of love', the fact re-

mains that this action of eight District Presidents has brought The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod to a very grave hour in her history. Not only has the corporate integrity of the Council of Presidents been virtually destroyed so that any future resolutions of that body will have little credibility, but the very life of our church body is threatened by the deliberate violation of constitutional authority." (p. 27, 28)

"I plan to meet with each of these men in the hope that through such ministry they may be led to see the seriousness of their actions and to do whatever they can to encourage the young men involved to receive the proper certification of the church. If such efforts prove fruitless, I would expect these district Presidents in conscience to resign their office. Under the circumstances, this would be proper indeed, as Doctor Harms has pointed out". (p.28)

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DISTRICT PRESIDENTS AGAIN

(5-02A)

Resolution 502 A closely parallels and extends the Tietjen situation. Here we have eight district presidents who have committed the following acts:

1. They have sworn to support the constitution of their District and of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod and have performed acts or permitted acts to be performed (i.e. certifying seminex students contrary to Constitution and By Laws of District and Synod) inconsistent with their sworn statement.

2. They have supported a group and a seminary whose titular head is Dr. Tietjen who by his own refusal to answer charges has been adjudicated to be guilty of malfeasance in office and false doctrine.

3. They are assuming a similar degree of immunity from being dealt with by the Districts they represent and the Synod to which they belong according to their Constitution and By Laws.

To answer these charges by saying they are acting in conscience is no answer. We do not bind anyone's conscience but we do insist no man has the right to use the office to which he has been elected to exercise his conscience contrary to the Constitution and By Laws of the District and Synod he has sworn to support.

If he feels conscience bound to protest the actions of the District and Synod let him resign his office and protect as an individual which is his God given right.

For any organization to allow the abuse of any of its offices for any purpose contrary to its Constitution, By-Laws and duly adopted Resolutions would mean a destruction of that organization. We assume these District Presidents have no such intent.

We would further state that any District which supports any of their officers in performing any of the acts previously outlined has assumed a position of equal responsibility and stands for those acts.

EDITORIAL POLICY

While the articles in Affirm with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod.

For Affirm is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Delegates are urged to read carefully Resolution 6-08 (Today's Business, p. 136) in its entirety, since it has only a short "Whereas" paragraph and then a series of seventeen "Resolves" dealing with Missouri's long range plans for higher education for the future.

Important issues are involved. They include our Ann Arbor Junior College, the Concordia Senior College at Fort Wayne, and the possible transfer of the Springfield Seminary to the Fort Wayne campus.

Briefly stated, this resolution recommends that the Junior College at Ann Arbor be elevated to a four year college, that the present Senior College at Fort Wayne be phased out, and that the Springfield Seminary be moved to the Fort Wayne campus and the Springfield facilities be sold.

Coupled with these primary considerations are several "Resolves" regarding the continuance of other synodical schools much as they are at present.

An informal polling of 170 delegates from 19 districts brought out the following opinions:

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
To close the Senior College	93%	7%
To make Ann Arbor a four year college	93%	7%
To move the Springfield Seminary to Fort Wayne	75%	25%
To assign this matter to a Committee for further study	32%	68%

Affirm offers its sample poll simply to aid delegates in prayerfully making their own decision in regard to the future direction of our higher educational program.

COMMITTEE 3 TAKES HARD

STAND ON ABORTION

Committee 3, Theology and Church Relations, is presenting one of the toughest resolutions against abortion to come from an American Christian church body. In proposed resolution 3-23A, the committee is recommending that the Missouri Synod "encourage its members, both corporately and individually, to speak for the unborn and publicly to protest abortion on demand". In a second and more significant resolution being proposed, the Synod will be given the authority to recommend that its members participate in supporting the giving of constitutional rights to the unborn.

Although the Roman Catholic Church opposes abortion, most of the main-line Protestant churches either take no position on this moral evil or even endorse it. Missouri Synod President, Doctor Jacob Preus, is a member of the board of the Missouri Right to Life Committee and is recognized as one of the most prominent church leaders opposed to abortion.

The Missouri Synod at its Milwaukee Convention in 1971 said that "willful abortion is contrary to the will of God". The resolution coming before the Anaheim convention calls for the Synod to take action in bringing this moral evil to a halt.

DELEGATES VOTE POSITIVE MISSION DIRECTION

Despite attempts by ELIM to sidetrack Resolution 2-01, To Affirm Our Church's Mission, delegates overwhelmingly adopted the resolution, which calls for a united mission effort, according to the Confessional stance of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Apparently the ELIM strategy included a plan to involve missionaries sympathetic to ELIM to flood the floor with negative complaints in order to defeat 2-01. The plan evidently was discarded, when Floor Committee 2 learned of it and delegates refused to accept diversionary tactics.

Speaking to Committee 2 in a special meeting were missionaries sympathetic to ELIM, some of whom are members of ELIM. When the committee learned that these missionaries planned to read a prepared statement derogatory to the Mission Board and Synod, a layman said that after hearing much about missions in the committee, he felt that such ELIM missionaries were the troublemakers in missions in recent years.

Tactics on the floor indicated that the mission problem has centered on doctrinal and confessional issues as Synod-critics attempted to delete portions of the resolution which insisted on Synodical policies and principles in missions. They saw these policies as "red flags" which made 2-01 unacceptable to them. Stalling tactics were stopped by the convention after 20 minutes of debate about calling the questions, division of the house, etc., while overseas nationals were waiting to speak about their mission.

Delegates, showing strong disapproval of ELIM's negative approach to missions and stalling efforts, gave resounding approval to 2-01. Affirm believes that delegates will give approval to other mission resolutions such as 2-06 and 2-07 on campus ministries as they did to 2-01, so the mission of Missouri Synod may go on without being impeded by two theologies and a refusal to follow Synodical policies.

THERE IS A DIFFERENCE

The debate concerning Resolution 3-06, "To Declare The Synod's Position on ELIM" is almost certain to bring up the request that Balance, Inc. be included in that resolution. The argument will probably be made that both ELIM and Balance, Inc. represent parties within Synod and, therefore, both should be either equally condemned or equally absolved.

In listening to the debate on this matter it is well to remember that there is a difference. Balance has always sought to abide by the resolutions of Synod. ELIM has openly advocated disobedience. Balance upholds Synod's doctrinal position -- ELIM seeks to bring in a new theology. Balance has never circularized Synod (sent out a mailing to all pastors) requesting funds -- has never inaugurated a competing mission program, supported a non-synodical Seminary, or had a placement program. ELIM has.

Read the resolutions carefully. The first 3 "Whereas" certainly permit various organizations to exist within Missouri. Only ELIM is guilty of the activities described in the 4th "Whereas". There is a difference!

PROGRESSIVE MISSION

Read together, Resolutions 1-08 and 1-10 make several important points concerning the theory and practice of evangelism. The concepts of responsibility, Biblical and Christ-centered theology, updating our strategy, co-operation, urgency, using our God-given talents wisely, and recognizing the special needs of men figure prominently in these two proposals.

The Missouri Synod participants in the International Congress on Evangelism at Lausanne, Switzerland, summarized their experiences in seven statements listed in 1-08. The resolution also commends the statements to the Board of Evangelism "for consideration and study as the board plans and develops its work for the Synod."

Resolution 1-10, emphasizing Jesus' parable of the Great Feast in Luke 14, urges the members of the Synod to become especially involved in outreach to those with special needs. "Jesus is Lord" - also for those in "hospitals, nursing homes, jails," etc. Further, boards of evangelism on the Synodical, District, and congregational levels are asked to identify volunteer agencies which afford Christians witnessing and service opportunities.

Affirm believes that these resolutions provide helpful awareness and direction for many of our evangelism programs. They should receive full support.

SERVICES TO MINORITIES

There are three resolutions dealing with special service to minorities that are deserving of wholehearted support.

Resolution 2-09A (TB, p.238) moves to establish a Black Mission Model Task Force. The Black Clergy Caucus of the Synod is asked to provide input for this very vital need.

Resolution 6-09 (TB, p.137) commends and encourages the Academy and College at Selma, Alabama. Even a cursory reading of the report cited (CW, p. 324) indicates the great strides that have been made at Selma in the last few years and should inspire all delegates to

give unswerving support to this fine program.

Resolution 6-10 (TB, p.138) asks for establishment of a Hispanic-American seminary project at Concordia, Austin. The overtures cited certainly indicate the need for this project.

In an age where increasing diversification of ministry is important to the whole mission effort of Synod, these resolutions provide means to accomplish commendable goals. Your affirmative vote will be a definite step in the right direction.

ENGLISH DISTRICT

(Continued from Page 1)

"English District"? They have been carefully studied. Of the original seven Articles, five have been modified or abrogated. Of the two that have remained unchanged, one specifies that members of the English District shall have the privilege of speaking in the English language at the synodical conventions and the other provides that the English District's commission or board for missions shall have permission to establish English mission congregations after consulting with the neighboring Missouri Synod parishes.

Affirm sees no valid basis for legal action on the part of the English District. It may safely be assumed that the question has been thoroughly researched by Synod's attorney. In any event, as the convention ponders this resolution, it should be well aware of possible legal action.

Weighing everything--history, emotion, finances, administration, and legal aspects--Affirm believes that Resolution 4-02 should be passed. The "English" District has a long and honorable history. Under God, it has served well its original purpose. We can understand the sentimental attachment of those who have been a part of its history. However, there really is no longer any valid reason for its continued existence.

A TASK BEFORE US!

Church Extension Funds provide for the extension and growth of the Kingdom of Christ. CEF provides the financial means for missions endeavors to move ahead. It provides the facilities and equipment for God's people.

Affirm urges the delegates of the Convention to support resolutions 2-15 through 2-18.

Resolution 2-18 asks that we back our faith with our investments. Good Christian Stewardship expects that. It is a spiritually sound act of faith.

Affirm urges support for Resolutions 2-15 through 2-17. We certainly want to operate our Church Extension Funds in agreement with and under the direction of the laws of our respective states. That is proper. Resolutions 2-15 and 2-16, encourage procedures and ways for better use of District and Synodical Funds in our churches. Excellent idea!

We need to support God's people at work in all their efforts. Church Extension Funds equip God's army for work.

All delegates are strongly encouraged to support Resolutions 2-15 through 2-18 on Church Extension Funds.

The Editorial Group

The Rev. William T. Eggers
Richard G. Korthals

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto
Dr. Robert Preus

Dr. Walter A. Maier

THANKS FOR THE COMPLIMENT

A motion was offered from the convention floor that, in the interest of saving time, Affirm's list of nominee preferences be adopted. Despite the disclaimer of facetiousness, the convention apparently enjoyed the humor of the motion.

But perhaps this is the place for a more serious note, too, regarding Affirm's point and purpose and its view of itself.

In its old-fashioned way, Affirm starts out by favoring an open Bible. In addition, Affirm openly and unabashedly is dedicated to our wonderful Missouri Synod and its conservative doctrinal position. Since its beginning, Affirm has had a policy of honestly speaking openly on the issues before us.

In line with that policy of openness, Affirm has been very candid in its willingness to state which candidates it has preferred. Though many issues and decisions confront this convention, there is no longer any question that the basic issue is doctrine. Unfortunately, the convention Workbook while supplying statistical and other information on candidates, in no way indicates their doctrinal position. Affirm's suggestions took that most important factor into consideration. Due to the large selection of excellent candidates, Affirm frequently found itself torn between several men, all of whom stand four-square with Synod. In such cases a most difficult decision had to be made. Though not all candidates were interviewed, they had been checked out.

Affirm was pleased to note that Clyde Nehrenz, delegate from Ohio, spoke up in defense of our advocating issues and supporting persons. Other delegates also expressed approval of this honest and open approach. But

the uniqueness of delegate Nehrenz' endorsement was that he was one of those many nominees of high ability and with a solid doctrinal stance who was not on the Affirm list.

In any event, Affirm remembers that there is a real reason for the word "Missouri" in our synodical name! Nobody tells a Missouri Synod convention delegate what to think, how to feel, or for whom to vote.

But it is certainly always in order for all of us to speak to each other regarding the issues and the pros and cons of the options available to the convention. Affirm has a reputation for honesty, forthrightness, and doctrinal soundness. Affirm pledges its continued efforts to deserve the confidence it enjoys.

WOMAN'S ROLE

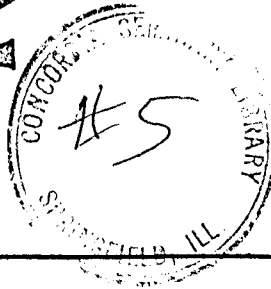
IN THE CHURCH

Resolutions 3-07 and 3-08 highlight the labors of our sisters in Christ. Affirm wishes to thank our Lord for their consecrated services and recognizes their valuable contributions. Resolution 3-08 properly assigns the Scriptural and Confessional study and implementation to the Commission on Theology and Church Relations. Both the position of Synod and any action pertaining to it should be Scriptural. We would hope that the "Resolveds" of Resolution 3-07 would be seen and carried out in this light. The Scriptures and Confessions can be trusted in this matter. We urge your support of these resolutions.

RECEIVED

JUL 28 1975

Affirm



Convention Issue
Anaheim, Calif.

No. 5

July 9, 1975

"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13

WHERE ARE WE ON WEDNESDAY MORNING?

When over a thousand delegates come to a convention from all parts of a large church body, one can realistically expect a considerable variation in the homework that has been done and in familiarity with the issues.

But one can hardly imagine any delegate to this convention being unaware of the awesome responsibility to reach decisions on major issues which could no longer be postponed without risking serious deterioration in the Synod.

Some major decisions involve a call for adherence to the Constitution and Bylaws. Other resolutions are strictly doctrinal in nature. Most of the major decisions, directly or indirectly, touch upon the doctrinal deterioration which increasingly has afflicted our church body in recent years.

On this Wednesday morning, with 2½ days of convention time remaining, what has happened to the major resolutions prepared by the floor committees?

A major action concerned the former St. Louis faculty majority whose doctrinal position was condemned by Synod at New Orleans. The convention adopted a proposal which instructs President Preus to appoint a 5-person committee to interview those former faculty members who wish to use the process for determining their individual doctrinal guilt or innocence.

In another important decision the convention dealt with the congregations which have accepted uncertified

Seminary graduates. Synod called upon those parishes to correct the situation. Bylaw procedures are available in case congregations do not comply.

In another decision also related to the Seminex matter, Synod asked that school to close itself. If it chooses to continue, that school, of course, will be treated as any other non-synodical theological institution.

The amalgamation of the English District into the various geographical districts was again before this convention as it has been before conventions repeatedly since 1923. Once more Synod declined to take action to dissolve the district.

The Tuesday session closed with no decision reached regarding what is to be done about the eight district presidents who have violated their oath of office by authorizing the ordination of men uncertified for the LC-MS ministry. Discussion on this important policy matter will be the first item of business on Wednesday morning.

Still to come before the convention is the important question of synodical action on ELIM which at present operates as "a church within a church."

Delegate attendance at the sessions has been quite consistent. However, as the days go by and the weariness of mind and body increases, there also increases the temptation to be off the floor. Affirm encourages all delegates to "hang in there." When you leave for home, you'll be glad you did.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

(6-28)

It seems most appropriate that a convention which is called upon To Affirm the Action of the Board for Higher Education (BHE) Regarding Academic Freedom (Res. 6-28) opened its sessions on July 4th with a patriotic observance in honor of the bicentennial of our nation's freedom trail.

While objections have been voiced to the BHE's Policy Statement on Limitation of Academic Freedom, they are without merit, when we remember that freedom is not license to speak or act irresponsibly without regard for others. This basic principle of freedom underlies our obedience to and our respect for our national government, as well as our fundamental relationship to our church body, the Missouri Synod. Freedom can never be permitted to become license in any walk of life!

This underlying concept of freedom is especially true with regard to our membership in the Synod for we each voluntarily joined the Synod and thus freely placed ourselves under Synod's Constitution and Bylaws. By this free choice, which we have all made, we have pledged that we will "support, act, and teach in accordance with them (synodically adopted doctrinal statements) until they have been shown to be contrary to God's Word" (Milw. Proceedings, Res. 2-21). This is by no means a limitation of our freedom, but rather an expression of our freedom to be God's people in an orderly and positive way.

If one feels a particular doctrinal statement of the Synod is not in accord with God's Word, as confessed by our church body, freedom is given to express dissent in a responsible and orderly way.

This same basic concept of freedom in the Synod underlies the BHE Policy Statement on Limitation of Academic Freedom for use at our colleges and seminaries. It simply states what all members of the Synod agree to when they become members of the Synod, namely, that we pledge ourselves to the Scriptures as God's inspired and inerrant Word and to the Lutheran Confessions and promise to honor and uphold doctrinal statements of the Synod, unless they are proven to be contrary to God's revealed Word. We all agree to that! For the professors at our colleges and seminaries is added only one basic thought, that they also teach accordingly.

Even here in the BHE document is outlined an orderly process of dissent, should one feel that is necessary.

No limitation of freedom at all! Just a concise restatement of what every member of the Synod pledges as he or she becomes a member of the Synod.

Your firm support of Resolution 6-28 is your freedom, as a member of the Synod, in action.

THE EDITORIAL GROUP

The Rev. William T. Eggers
Richard G. Korthals

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto
Dr. Robert Preus

Dr. Walter A. Maier

EMOTIONAL STRESS AND
AMNESTY (8-09 & 8-13)

Though seemingly far apart in subject matter, Resolutions 8-09 and 8-13 both involve the application of basic Scriptural principles, sin and grace.

Counseling people on the Vietnam amnesty question (Res. 8-13) and meeting the high incidence of emotional stress in our present culture (Res. 8-09) involve not only understanding attitudes to veteran and draft problems as well as mental health programs, but also the application of contrition, repentance and absolution.

The removal of guilt and restoration of the forgiving love of Christ make essential the Christian ministry of both pastors and people. There is no substitute for a sound Scriptural stance and an understanding application of the Word to the problems which arise in our daily living. Christ's words are our guide, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven".

Affirm believes both resolutions to be worthy of support.

DOCTRINAL REVIEW (7-14)

One of the problems which constantly faces our Synod is that of providing publications for its membership which are doctrinally sound. It may appear to be harsh and nondemocratic to speak of censorship, yet is very necessary in a confessional church body if dependable reading materials are to be produced. The problems which were encountered with Mission:Life indicate what can happen when this system breaks down.

Resolution 7-14, which reaffirms the Synod's process of doctrinal review, speaks to this issue. It points out that a primary objective of the Synod is "the conservation and promotion of the unity of the true faith", and that the office of the President is charged with the supervision regarding the doctrine of the Synod. The president normally appoints doctrinal reviewers to assist him in this task.

Resolution 7-14 asks the Synod to reaffirm its determination to continue the practice of reviewing material prior to publication. A "yes" vote will assure that this vital function will continue.

BIBLE-SCIENCE	LEARN
ASSOCIATION MEETING	ABOUT
THURSDAY, JULY 10, 1975	THE
12:45 -- 2 P.M.	PROGRESS
LA POSADA RESTAURANT	BEING

1050 W. KATELLA	MADE IN
DESSERT & BEVERAGE FURNISHED	CREATIONISM

A WORD ON POLITICKING

One of the most hopeful signs in regard to the matter of politicking at conventions was the early action of the convention on Saturday morning, when it voted with an overwhelming majority to allow material to be passed out, placed on tables, and otherwise distributed as long as it was done outside of the "working areas" of the convention itself.

Affirm, over its brief history, has spoken on this matter of politics on several occasions. Always it has been our position that politics in and of itself is not wrong. Politics involves three ingredients: Studying an issue, reaching a conclusion, and seeking to win converts. Politics is absolutely essential in any of man's organizations, wherever the democratic process is used to decide positions and to fill positions. What is wrong is to endeavor to legislate against the practicing of politics, thus forcing it underground.

It seems almost inconceivable that at the ELIM meetings held each convention day, the ELIM leaders even permit, let alone condone, castigating Affirm. We do not suggest that every voice which is heard at convention microphones decrying Affirm is that of an ELIMITE. But we do note that at these ELIM gatherings where their preferences for position and persons are discussed and where their strategy is plotted, the matter of "how can we turn the convention against Affirm" is permitted and sometimes even promoted.

Affirm stands on this matter basically where Synod stands. Promotion of or dissent against existing or contemplated positions and practices of

Synod is not wrong in and of itself. What is wrong is either to promote or to dissent using tactics which are reprehensible, using verbiage which is careless or callous, or employing channels which are prohibited by the existing rules within the framework of our Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of Synod.

The early Saturday morning action of the convention was, in effect, a breath of fresh air.

The convention has an opportunity to open the window a bit more by rejecting Res. 5-33 which calls for declining Overture 5-168 (WB, p.265). The Overture deals with circularizing Synod, specifically Bylaw 2.127e, and correctly points out that any "wrong" which might be perpetrated has to do with the content being circulated, not with the act of circularizing.

Affirm suggests that Res. 5-33 be voted down and that Overture 5-168 be adopted.

THE LOVING HAND OF FELLOWSHIP

Affirm rejoices in the resolve to make altar and pulpit fellowship with the Independent Evangelical Free Church of Germany a reality. Mutual Scriptural and Confessional agreement is a blessing worked by the Holy Spirit. Unanimous approval is in order for Resolution 3-14. Praise Christ Jesus, the Lord!

EVANGELICAL LUTHERANS IN MISSION

(RESOLUTION 3-06)

In a previous article (Affirm, #3, July 7th) Affirm treated the history of ELIM and showed how it had demonstrated that it was far more than a confessional movement whose purpose was to convince the Synod that certain resolutions ought to be rescinded. Actions of ELIM within the ensuing months clearly indicated, as the synodical Board of Directors in June 1974 stated, that it was "divisive in the church" having the "potential for division of the Synod."

Now let's carefully examine the "Resolveds" of Resolution 3-06 as they address themselves to this cancer eating away at our "walking together" as a Synod.

Members of ELIM, carrying out active roles in this schismatic group (and schismatic and divisive we sincerely believe they have proven themselves to be), are giving offense, not only to loyal members of the Synod, but also to the world at large.

There simply is no other way of viewing what ELIM has done since its inception - setting up a rival seminary and mission thrust, siphoning off funds from the Synod to carry on its divisive program -- than this that it is an offense. A spade must be called a spade, even if it parades under the mask of religiosity.

Therefore, it follows very naturally that we as a Synod request all "congregations, officers, and boards

to minister evangelically and pastorally" with members of ELIM and lovingly request that they cease this schismatic movement by disassociating themselves from ELIM - sever their connections completely - or "terminate their membership in the Synod rather than to continue to act so as to divide and weaken it."

Such voluntary agreement to and cooperation with the objectives and doctrinal stance of the Synod would spell the end to this schismatic group, ELIM. However, if pastors and officers of the Synod and members of the faculties of synodical institutions persist in this movement to undermine and divide the Synod then, after pastoral admonition, appropriate action must be taken.

Certainly, in love the Synod pledges to listen to and discuss grievances - this is basic to membership in Synod, which denotes a "walking together" - but where such an evangelical approach is refused and rebuffed, then appropriate action must be taken to call those who are schismatic and divisive to account.

The Synod is bending over backward to listen to such dissidents as ELIM, but there comes a time when listening must end and action against those who are divisive and schismatic must begin for the welfare of the church. Therefore, Resolution 3-06 earnestly and prayerfully beseeches members of ELIM "to follow mutually agreed adopted procedures of the Synod for expressing their dissent" and to cease this movement.

What could be fairer than that, members of ELIM? How can anyone refuse to support 3-06?

SEMINARY GRADUATE SCHOOLS

These facts bear repeating:

1. The turmoil in Synod, while involving manifold ramifications, is at heart a doctrinal controversy. The battle versus a liberalized doctrinal stance thus far has been lost by all major American church bodies. The question now before the Missouri Synod is whether we, by the mercy and grace of God, shall be the first exception to this dismal rule. But let this fact be faced by us all--the fight is doctrinal.

2. The ultimate question as to whether or not a church body shall remain conservative or liberal is not one which confronts a church overnight. Doctrinal deterioration is a subtle, quiet, and progressive malady. It has been so with us. The decisions we face at this convention are the culmination of twenty years of creeping liberalism.

3. The heart of the doctrinal problem lies in an attitude towards Scripture which makes the interpreter the manipulator of God's Word rather than its obedient servant. The common name for this attitude is "the historical-critical method". Approximately 15 years ago Dr. Martin Franzmann, in a devastating critique, pointed out that this method "cannot be considered as merely a theologically neutral tool or technique of interpretation" since it "undertakes to pass a value judgment on the historical substance of revelation" and "assigns to the interpreter the capacity and the authority to distinguish between 'the facts which matter and the facts which don't.'"

Dr. Franzmann then states flatly, "Once the basic premise of the critical approach is conceded, one can no longer talk of pure doctrine." He asks, "If a Lutheran theologian comes to the conviction that the Virgin Birth is one of the facts that doesn't count, who is going to convince him (and convict him), on the premises of this method, that it is a fact that does count?" Dr. Franzmann concluded: "It should be obvious that, on the premises of the historical-critical method, the most vulnerable fact in the New Testament is the fact of the Resurrection."

Dr. Franzmann wrote these words years ago. Are we willing to face the hard facts as spelled out by this master theologian who, at last April's theological convocation, said that he still stood by those words?

4. This attitude towards the Bible came out of the so-called age of rationalism (reason over revelation) in Germany, and from there into American theological schools and the theology departments of universities. Many of our Missouri Synod professors, doing graduate work at these schools, were infected by this theological virus. Bringing it back into our own seminaries and classrooms they infected their students, who then went into the ministry and infected the people of our parishes. One sees demonstrated again the truth of the old saying that a church body, like a tree, dies from the top down.

(RESOLUTIONS 6-14 AND 6-17)

5. A church body which wishes to remain confessional must most certainly deal with such errant professors. How have we handled the false teaching in the Missouri Synod? One way has been to draw the line on our faculty - with the result that the majority of them walked out in a mass rebellion. This is what happened at our St. Louis seminary with about 45 professors. A second way is for someone to file charges against a specific professor, which must then be handled, at least at present, according to the 6.79 procedures of our synodical Handbook. This route, as we have experienced with the charges filed against Dr. John H. Tietjen, has already taken two years and the end of the procedure is nowhere in sight.

In either case, whether by massive walkout or by individual charges, we are dealing with men who have already gone wrong. This is surgery. As with all surgery, it offers a real shock to the system.

In dealing with this malady, is there any such thing as preventive medicine? There most certainly is! The Missouri Synod can develop and expand its own graduate programs within the framework of its own doctrinal position.

This brings us to two brief resolutions, 6-14 and 6-17. In Res. 6-14 our Springfield Seminary is encouraged in the development of a program for the Doctor of Ministry degree. Looking at our St. Louis Seminary, Res. 6-17 calls

for "an expanded graduate school of theology which could serve as a center for confessional scholars and teachers." At first blush these two resolutions may seem to involve only dry, academic matters. In fact, they are a vital contribution to the future doctrinal health of our Synod. We hope these two resolutions get the discussion they deserve, followed by an enthusiastic endorsement by the convention.



WHO IS RIGHT IN THE MISSOURI
SYNOD DISPUTE?, AN ARTICLE
BY HAROLD LINDSELL, EDITOR
OF THE FOREMOST CONSERVATIVE
RELIGIOUS PUBLICATION IN
THE COUNTRY, CHRISTIANITY
TODAY HAS BEEN REPRINTED
AND CAN BE HAD FREE AT
THE PUBLICATIONS TABLE IN
CONVENTION HALL. THIS OUT-
SIDER'S VIEW IS TIMELY,
ACCURATE, AND POINTED.

CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

(3-15A)

In presenting Resolution 3-15A, (TB, p.243), the Committee on Theology and Church Relations has shown love, compassion, and concern for what is, admittedly, a serious issue within the Church today, that of the charismatic movement.

We note that the Resolution is to provide guidance, as well as to warn against dangers, by commending to the Synod the position paper of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) entitled The Charismatic Movement and Lutheran Theology.

The third "Resolve" (line 54ff) urges the CTCR not only to complete its guidelines and release them to the church as soon as possible, but also to continue its study of the charismatic movement. This is most certainly an important part of the issue.

Throughout the resolution we find a desire to deal lovingly and with brotherly concern when problems arise from charismatic involvement. The Committee is to be commended for its position on this issue and for its concern for the church.

Resolution 3-15A is strongly recommended for adoption.

MEDICAL MISSIONS (2-10A)

Resolution 2-10A (TB, p. 238), although short, has a lot to say about a lengthy series of proposed Handbook changes regarding Medical Missions.

In declining to recommend these changes, 2-10A properly observes that such changes leave the relationship between the Board for Missions and the Council for Christian Medical Work in a state of confusion.

2-10A also notes that the Council has been blessed by God in the past. There is no reason to assume that it will not continue to be so blessed.

We believe that the provisions of 2-10A that call for further study, particularly in the light of reorganization of Mission Staff, is in the best interests of Synod at this time.

2-10A is a practical and workable answer to the proposals presented in the Convention Workbook.

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS

(7-15)

Resolution 7-15, which encourages the publication of "New Life in Christ" series of Sunday School materials, will be welcome news to many congregations.

The Mission: Life curriculum has not only had doctrinal problems (some of which have been corrected), but it has also proven to be difficult to use by many of our congregations. As a result, they have had to continue using the Life in Christ series, excellent material based upon sound Biblical Theology.

In recent years the efforts of those responsible for Sunday School literature have been devoted to the Mission: Life project. The resultant neglect of the Life in Christ series seems to suggest a review and possible updating of what is basically a very fine series. Resolution 7-15 answers the need.

THE SYNODICAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

Two of the most important resolutions to come out of Committee Six are 6-07A and 6-08A, found on pages 247ff of Today's Business. It is easy to see, after studying the Report of the Task Force on Higher Education, that the committee did its homework and responded intelligently.

The first "Resolve" may sound merely routine, but it is certainly called for. Our professors are dedicated and work long hours. Yet the salary scales at our Synodical schools are such that many are forced to live at or near the poverty level, and most wives are almost required to work. The commendation of the professor's work has been earned.

The first two parts of the second "Resolve" are aimed at correcting an inequity which exists at present in regard to the system of Synodical subsidy allocation. This subsidy, which is really given to assist the student who is preparing for full time church service, is presently based on the total enrollment. But an examination of the chart found on page 286 of the Workbook discloses some interesting facts. At Austin only 25% of the students are preparing for full time church work; the other 75% are general students. At Edmonton 89% are general students, while at Ann Arbor only 28% are in this category. Among the 4-year colleges half of Bronxville's are in the general education program, while at River Forest and Seward 7% are in this classification. The second "Resolve" would assure Synod that its support is going to those colleges which are training the teachers and pastors.

The remainder of the "Resolves" recognize that good stewardship is required in locating, planning, and

operating colleges. It wisely points Synod toward seeking means of consolidating rather than adding, especially in these days of declining enrollments.

Resolution 6-08A will undoubtedly bring an out-pouring of emotional speeches, because the alumni have strong feelings regarding their college or seminary. Locations, buildings, and areas often evoke fond memories of bygone days, and to relocate or close buildings may appear to some to be almost sacrilegious.

Yet when all is said and done, the solution offered by the committee in 6-08A seems courageous, wise and practical. It doesn't make much sense to operate an expensive institution like Fort Wayne at half capacity or less. The chart on page 285 in the Workbook tells the story.

Affirm commends Committee 6 for the fine work which it did on these two resolutions and recommends the adoption of both 6-07A and 6-08A, though admittedly 6-08A can raise many complex and debatable problems.

ENCOURAGE THE CANADIAN BROTHERS (3-18)

Affirm encourages our fellow saints of the Canadian Districts, to seek mutual Scriptural and Confessional agreement with the LCA-Canada section. Resolution 3-18 is a necessary step in this process. We pray that it will result in a Spirit given blessing, like that of our proposed relationship with the Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany.

IT'S YOUR HYMNAL

(3-16)

In a very real sense, our hymnal belongs to Missouri's congregations. That is where it chiefly is used. Only lately have many of our people heard about the inter-synodical hymnal, which has been in the works since the Detroit convention ten years ago.

As information has become available regarding the proposed omission of many doctrinally-rich and old-time favorites, a tide of concern has risen.

Resolution 3-16 is a well-balanced response. It provides that our congregations be given full information regarding the proposed hymnal and that they be given an opportunity to react to its contents. The response of the congregations together with the findings

of the CTCR, the doctrinal reviewers and the Commission on Worship are to be presented to Synod in convention before publication of the new hymnal.

Only a hymnal with grass roots support will be purchased by our congregations and will promote one object of Synod, namely, "to bring about the largest uniformity in church practice, church customs and, in general, congregational affairs."

Few matters have drawn the deep emotional response that the proposed "new hymnal" has drawn, once the details about it have become known.

GIVE TO ELIM?

Affirm supports Resolution 2-20 which opposes giving Synodical mission funds to ELIM.

God calls upon us to be stewards of His gifts. We recognize that an individual's conscience may move him to contribute to ELIM.

It is not right, however, for a congregation which is subsidized to use those funds for the support of ELIM. ELIM has solicited "an alternative" support for its Mission Program. The individual who faithfully supports Synod has made the decision NOT to support ELIM. It is not right for a congregation or the Synod to over-ride his decision. We support the Synod in calling upon congregations to "walk together" also in its mission efforts.

LAYMEN'S ANALYSIS, SUPPLEMENT 1,
CARRIES AN EXCELLENT SUMMARY OF
MISSION BOARD STAFF MATTERS, AN
ADDRESS BY PROF. O. C. HINTZE
OF OUR SPRINGFIELD SEMINARY.
THIS 7 PAGE PAMPHLET REVIEWS
THIS HISTORY AND ANALYZES THE
ROOT OF THE TROUBLE. A LIMITED
NUMBER OF THESE PAMPHLETS ARE
AVAILABLE ON THE TABLE WITH
SUCH MATERIALS NEAR THE MAIN
ENTRANCE OF THE CONVENTION HALL.

AFFIRM

LITIGATION (9-12)

Scriptures admonish against the use of courts to seek redress for wrongs no matter how right we are. However, human nature and our current society has conditioned us to seek legal relief through these channels.

So we anticipate that because the possibility of legal action may occur due to divisions in congregations, those who may consider such a course of action should proceed cautiously before expending great sums of money and being assured of the final result.

We sincerely hope counsel will be available in all districts from our membership who should give initial advice. Then interested parties may proceed to seek other counsel.

The counsel you seek should be well versed in all phases of general and non-profit corporation law as well as the religious implications that may have a bearing.

We sincerely believe litigation is not the answer and all other avenues of approach should be considered.

HERESIES REARMED (3-21)

Resolution 3-21 speaks to the matter of Christ's second coming. Affirm feels that the spiritual delusions of our time make this resolution appropriate. The clear statements of Scripture and the Confessions of the meaning of the millenium, the Anti-christ and other phenomena associated with Christ's coming should be made available in study document form to the membership of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. The rearmend heresies of the past need to be shown to be such, in the clear light of the Scriptures. This resolution is timely!

Affirm, sponsored by Balance Inc., is published monthly or more frequently by a group of its members concerned about theological and related developments in The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod.

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Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53216

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While the articles in Affirm with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of

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Convention Issue
Anaheim, Calif.
No. 6
July 10, 1975

"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13

AFTER WE GET HOME

A day and a half or more of the convention time still remains. If the usual pattern holds, decisions will come quicker as closing time comes nearer.

But the convention already has made sufficient significant and important decisions which call for a grateful and humble singing of the Doxology. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow...." Grateful singing, because God continues to bless despite our sins and bumbling. Humble singing because the blessings do indeed come from Him from whom all our blessings flow.

Better than 500 circuits sent over a thousand delegates with the clear mandate to reach decisions in the important areas where such decisions have been reserved by Synod for itself.

The delegates by and large have met the challenge and have risen to the occasion despite extended rhetoric and studied parliamentary maneuvering. They were sent to reach decisions and decisions have been made.

A major decision (Res. 5-02A) sets forth loving but firm steps to be taken in the matter of the eight district presidents who have authorized the ordination and placement in congregations and of men who have not been properly certified for the ministry in our Synod.

These uncertified men have come out of a school called Seminex and the convention dealt with that matter. With reference to the school itself, Synod called upon Seminex to close its doors and, if it fails to do that, Seminex is simply to be regarded as any other theological school outside of our Synod. A route to proper certification was provided for its 1974, 1975, 1976 graduates. Since the Seminex faculty is made up largely of men who left their teaching posts in a walk-out from the St. Louis Seminary, these men are under the cloud of New Orleans Resolution 3-09, which specified the false doctrines which form a portion of the doctrinal position of the former faculty majority. These men have repeatedly complained about being under that cloud and have said that they wanted to be cleared or found guilty. Even though they walked away from jurisdiction of the seminary Board of Control, which was authorized to conduct the required individual interviews, the Synod walked the extra mile and has provided a special procedure under which these former faculty members may give expression to what they believe and teach.

Another matter which only Synod can settle is ELIM. The manner in which ELIM functions was found to be schismatic and in violation of the very first object for which Synod exists. Provisions were made for dealing with congregations, pas-

(Continued on page 8)

GRATITUDE FOR ANAHEIM ACTIONS

As we approach the conclusion of this 51st regular convention of our Synod, days charged with emotion because of the weighty matters which confronted the delegates, we would be remiss if we did not express appropriate words of gratitude.

First and foremost, most certainly, must be a prayer of thanks to our gracious Father in heaven for his protection over all of us as we traveled here and during our stay in Anaheim. Moreover, we are grateful to Almighty God that His Holy Spirit led the delegates, after much prayer and soul-searching, to make responsible decisions.

Not all delegates are in agreement with all of the decisions reached, nor was this to be expected. A convention such as this is held for the purpose of discussing issues and then, by a majority vote, adopting a position on them.

We feel that the delegates acted responsibly and took positions which they, under the Spirit's guidance, considered expedient and necessary in order to express Missouri's doctrinal stance in controverted matters.

Walk a Mile in My Shoes was the title of a popular song a few years back which seems to fit our relationship with each other, both during and after this convention. We feel that each delegate earnestly tried to walk in the shoes of those not in agreement with him, and we pray that those who supported resolutions which were defeated will receive the majority vote of the convention with a God-pleasing understanding.

May God go with us as we close this convention on Friday and may our Synod be blessed with a true "walking together" under the truth of God's revealed and inerrant Word! That is our prayer!

REMOVING DISTRICT & SYNODICAL OFFICERS (5-30)

Throughout its long history Missouri's difficulties with District and Synodical officers have happily been minimal. Until the most recent years there apparently have been few or no occasions to establish an orderly process to remove such officers (for cause) from their office.

Times unfortunately have changed, and one of the changes is reflected in 5-30 which asks the Task Force to study Missouri's Constitution and Bylaws in order to consider the concerns expressed in a number of overtures and, presumably, to create an orderly Bylaw process to remove an officer from office when necessary.

For the sake of decency and order, this resolution should be passed.

APPOINTING THE CCM (5-27)

For four years the question of the way in which Missouri's important Commission on Constitutional Matters is created has been under study. Floor Committee 5 properly rejected the suggestion that the CCM be elected by the Convention, since under the present appointment system its history has "shown that there has been a beneficial continuity of service".

However, the Floor Committee unaccountably offers a change in the method of appointing the CCM; without offering a rationale for its proposal, it asks the convention to change the wording of the Bylaw on this matter so that the President, in consultation with the Board of Directors rather than with the other members of the Praesidium, shall appoint the CCM.

Since the present practice has been "beneficial", Affirm suggests the convention not change it, and defeat 5-27.

PRESS CONFERENCES (5-02A)

In a press conference held at 12:30 yesterday, shortly after the convention voted 626-466 to deal with them, the eight dissident District Presidents discussed their possible future actions.

It would appear that the tone of the meeting was set in the opening comments of President Jaech of the Northwest District, when he stated that they were not talking about leaving Synod, and President Ressimyer of the Atlantic District, when he noted that the church must face up to the issues--an action which he felt the present administration has been unwilling to take. By their actions, these District Presidents feel they are forcing this move. All indicated plans of some sort or another to call special convocations or meetings possibly leading to special District Conventions. President Frincke of the Eastern District noted that the last district convention was never adjourned but had only been recessed and might reconvene this fall. Expecting his district to back him fully, he noted that even if he is deposed, he will not accept Synod's authority.

One reporter, who may prefer to editorialize while questioning, asked if "Affirm and others will now intensify efforts to undermine you..." President Meyer noted that personal attacks in the Colorado Layman's Newsletter have been counter-productive to the conservative cause. President Riedel of the New England District noted that all have had pressure against them and predicted that "hate mail" will increase. It is notable that President Frincke of the Eastern District estimates that his "support" (not indicated whether pastoral or congregational) has dropped from 74% at the last district convention to "maybe 70%", due to increased DCP activity in the area.

Almost all Presidents indicated they had overwhelming pastoral support, but many were reluctant to put any figure on total congregational or lay support.

President Neunaber of the Southern Illinois District stated that we need to focus on the issues and do what needs to be done towards restoration of unity, and that he was "not aware of any effort on the part of the Administration to do this." This must come as no small surprise to the concerned laymen and pastors of Synod who have seen President Preus and others in Synod's administration bend over backward to be fair and reach God-pleasing solutions.

On the question of what authority would still exist, if these men rejected the authority of Synod, President Meyer of the Colorado District noted that Synod's authority is constitutionally limited. President Riedel stated flatly that he has no other authority than that which derives from the congregation in his District.

In a later press conference held by some members of the Council of Presidents, this reporter got the definite impression that there is some confusion over the "60 day" provision in the next-to-last "Resolve" of 5-02A. This is apparently interpreted by some to mean the next convention after the pastoral care and discipline provision of that "Resolve" have taken place (which includes consultation with the Council of Presidents) and the President of Synod sees no other course but to invoke the 60 day provision.

So interpreted, it would appear that we are not talking about the "next regularly scheduled District Convention" which most delegates have

(Continued on page 7)

ACCREDITATION

(6-13)

At any convention, church or otherwise, resolutions of some importance get scant floor attention simply because they are non-controversial.

If Res. 6-13 has been on the floor prior to Thursday a.m., it would be safe to assume that it was passed promptly and with little comment. After all, who would vote against a resolution titled, To Maintain Highest Accreditation?

Accreditation does not guarantee quality education, much less does it assure sound theological training, especially by Missouri Synod standards. Yet, as the resolution states, "Accreditation is of considerable importance". In almost any area, accreditation requires a certain quantity of desirable factors. Presumably, if the quantity is sufficient, there will also be some quality.

Students and graduates of our synodical schools often continue undergraduate and graduate studies at other schools. The transfer value of our course credits is important. Finally, as we recruit students, the accreditation of our schools is worth mentioning.

The resolution has a specific reference to our St. Louis Seminary. While maintaining its accreditation with ATS (Association of Theological Schools), the Seminary has had some probation notations against it which began several years ago as a political move when the school president was making efforts to thwart the synodical president in his doctrinal supervision "over all such as are employed by Synod". A few notations are still to be removed. No doubt, Seminary administration and Board of Control appreciate the resolution's encouragement that the Seminary should "take whatever immediate action necessary to remove the probation".

The primary goal of our colleges and seminaries is to prepare men and women for service in the church. This obviously means sound, solid, Christian Lutheran training. It also means high academic standards and in that area accreditation is one factor.

CCM OPINIONS

(5-09)

History has repeatedly shown that, as with other laws, the Bylaws of the Handbook need to be interpreted between Conventions. Quite obviously, this will continue to be the case in the future.

The Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) has the responsibility of making these interpretations. The question as to the binding nature of the opinions rendered by the CCM has been raised.

Floor Committee 5 has wisely concluded "that the opinions from the Committee on Constitutional Matters continue to be binding unless overruled by the Synod in convention".

It also wisely distinguished between those opinions which are personal and should be kept confidential and those which are of general interest and affect the actions of various Boards, Councils and Commissions of Missouri. It encourages the CCM to publish opinions of general interest.

Affirm supports 5-09.

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DISTRICT RESOLUTIONS MUST BE IN HARMONY WITH THE SYNOD

(5-02 AND 5-20)

At first glance it would appear that Resolution 5-12 and 5-20 affirm the obvious position of the Constitution of the Synod, that since the districts are arms of Synod, their resolutions must be in harmony with the Constitution, Bylaws and resolutions of the Synod itself. However, in view of the events of yesterday morning and in view of the statements made to the media since the adoption of 5-02 yesterday, especially the statement of the "dissident 8 presidents" read by President Jaech of the Northwest district, these resolutions have become crucial.

The district president said:

"We eight agree that the final judgment concerning our continuing service to the church as district presidents rests with the congregations of our districts which elected us to office. We intend to take our case to them. If they agree with your judgment, we will accept that decision. But they must ultimately decide this issue."

They went on to say:

"We intend to continue our present practice which we believe is in full accord with the Scriptural and confessional standards to which we voluntarily bound ourselves by our ordination vows and by the promises made when we accepted the presidencies of our districts."

They and the whole Synod need to understand the full implication of their statement. They are inviting their districts to defy the Synod itself! They are asking for resolutions in defiance of the Synod's Constitution and Bylaws! If a district would follow their lead on this issue, it is, in effect, breaking fellowship with Synod itself. It is declaring that it will no longer "Walk together" with the rest of us. The gauntlet will have been tossed!

Synod needs to anticipate such a strong reaction and (remind) those proposing such actions of the error and the unconstitutionality of resolutions which deliberately oppose the Synod's position. Such resolutions violate our sacred agreement to "walk together". They are schismatic by definition. We need to boldly affirm the obvious, but fundamental truth, that "all District resolutions which are in conflict with the Synod's Constitution, Bylaws, and Resolutions are unconstitutional, and therefore, null and void (Article XII, 2: Bylaw 3.07)."

ON EARNING --

BY SAVING! (4-33)

Resolution 4-33 espouses a fine policy. Economy of God's gifts begins with the leadership of the church. The roving meetings of the College of Presidents, admittedly to wrestle with difficult problems, have raised serious stewardship questions throughout our church. We all know that reasonable accommodations can be had in the St. Louis and Chicago areas. What can be said of synodical funds needlessly expended can also be said of similar funds from district coffers! Certain "bishops of the church" have deemed "first class delivery" all the way as befitting their office. Repeated pleas for sacrificial living and giving cut both directions in the church. The entire church will be watching the compliance with this resolution!

Affirm is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

DEACONESS RECOGNITION

(5-19)

Deaconesses and their work are important God-given gifts to the Church. The unique talents and special enthusiasm with which they serve the Lord have enriched the ministries of many congregations, hospitals, inner-city and foreign missions, social work, and other special programs.

Resolution 5-19 calls upon Synod to recognize the Lutheran Deaconess Association's training efforts for women. Administrators are encouraged to intensify deaconess recruitment and involvement on boards, commissions, and committees.

A representative of the Board for Higher Education presently serves as an advisory member of the Deaconess

Association's Board of Directors; this resolution continues this. Further, it provides that the Synodical President appoint "a successor ad hoc committee ... to explore further the questions concerning the relationship of deaconesses to the Synod and the expansion of women's ministry in the church." Finally, congregation and institutions already served by deaconesses are urged to give them greater recognition.

The deaconess ministry, as traditionally conceived and carried out in our midst is extremely valuable. 5-19 encourages this salutary work; and aids it with the creation of an ad hoc committee to clarify the status of the deaconess according to God's Word.

SUPPLEMENTAL GIVING (4-19 AND 4-20)

Resolutions 4-19 and 4-20 deal with special gifts, above and beyond the normal offerings contributed through the individual parishes of Synod. Such gifts can well be a boon to Synod and its Districts in its financial difficulties.

Inflation and recession have hit hard at gifts formerly received from foundations. This source of support must be replaced. Our schools will depend heavily on supplemental giving.

Supplemental giving will bring added blessings to our mission field endeavors and countless other areas of Synod's work.

Added expertise and understanding in supplemental giving should be a part of this stewardship effort. A thorough study of the matter should be conducted.

Resolution 4-17 also deals with supplemental giving. Over a longer period of years, many districts can stabilize their budgets and/or do additional kingdom work via the District Foundation.

Affirm feels certain that a vast expertise already exists in Synod on supplemental giving. Individual laymen, Synodical School Development officers, LCMS Foundation staff and many others could combine their knowledge and experience toward a long-term blessing for the Lord Christ.

assumed would be the convention scheduled in most Districts in 1976. This question was posed by Rev. Richard Neuhaus of The Lutheran Forum. If so interpreted, the situation could continue unresolved for an unknown number of years, and the intent of the resolution would be totally subverted.

President Arnold Kuntz of the Southern California District commented at this press conference that, in addition to the principles of autonomy, conscience, constitutionality, etc., there was one very important principle involved--that "Unilateral action is not helpful to the church." Affirm heartily agrees. That's what this resolution was all about! It is unfortunate, indeed, that conditions existed which made this action necessary. As President Preus so eloquently stated, just one word of assurance would have helped settle the issue without passing 5-02A.

President Happel, chairman of Committee 5, correctly noted that the office of District President (even that of Circuit Counselor) is a Synodical office. It is evident that his concept of the constitution and that of President Riedel are at opposite poles. It is also evident that there is much yet to be done. Resolution 5-02A provided a loving and evangelical vehicle of action. We now call on the President of Synod and the Council of Presidents to implement that vehicle. Let's clear the air once and for all.

THE EDITORIAL GROUP

The Rev. William T. Eggers
Richard G. Korthals
Dr. Walter A. Maier
The Rev. Ewald J. Otto
Dr. Robert Preus

DIVINE CALLS, ETC.

(5-20, 5-21, 5-23, AND 3-17)

Like Topsy in Uncle Tom's Cabin The "professional roster" of Synod had "jes' growed" over the years. We speak of clergymen, pastors, reverends, ministers of Christian education, teachers, etc.

Overture 5-21 (CW, p. 223) refers to difficulties with Internal Revenue Service rulings. Overture 5-20 is interested in the convention voting rights of these various groups. Res. 5-23 wants these matters considered by the Council of Presidents and the special Task Force which is studying the Constitution and Bylaws of Synod.

Res. 3-17 probes a little deeper, reflecting an overture request to re-study the doctrine of the "divine call" as well as the variety of procedures which, at present, are being used to "ordain" pastors, teachers, synodical officers, and professors. Resolution 3-17 points out that the CTCR is in the midst of a study of this entire matter and suggests that we wait until the study is completed.

Both resolutions (5-23 and 3-17), in the interest of saving time, should be considered together by the convention. It is our opinion that the recommendation of Res. 3-17 should prevail.

SELF DETERMINATION

OF MINORITIES (4-16)

Affirm genuinely approves of the mature and responsible approach toward minority groups finding answers to their own problems. This has a long historical precedent in the LC-MS. Resolution 4-16 is to be commended for recognizing the valuable contributions minorities have made in the past, make now, and will surely make in the future, in our church. The talents of these our fellow-saints should be used throughout our entire church body.

HOME (Continued on page 1)

tors, teachers, district and synodical officers, and professors who play an active role in ELIM.

Synod reasserted its right and its duty to make doctrinal statements as conditions require, and it reaffirmed its adoption of A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles which had been adopted by Synod at New Orleans. These are some of the major decisions already off the convention docket. They were weighty decisions and did not come easy, but the delegates did not flinch.

All of this is to the good. However, the normal lag between passing resolutions and carrying them out is sure to be heightened in the case of many of this convention's major actions. For example, just moments after the Synod declared specifically that the eight district presidents were in direct violation of our Constitution in the placement and ordination of uncertified men, the presidents in question had read to the convention a statement which indicates their clear intent to continue in their rebellious ways. They stated bluntly, "We intend to continue our present practice." There is no indication that Seminex will dissolve itself. Few expect the former St. Louis faculty members actually to present themselves before the 5-person committee appointed to evaluate their guilt or innocence. No one really expects ELIM suddenly to go out of business in a noble demonstration of repentance.

This means that when the delegates go home the real task has only begun. In the very nature of the case, the normal problems associated with implementing convention resolutions will be increased by opposition, parliamentary and procedural delays and a general

reluctance to cooperate in achieving a prompt resolution of the problems to which the resolutions addressed themselves.

Specific suggestions for carrying out the convention resolutions with promptness must await more careful study. But one thing is sure, there will have to be a real grass roots effort across the board in our Synod to encourage, promote and, wherever necessary, prod for a God-pleasing conclusion. "Let George do it" simply will not do. The delegates who have here made the decisions must follow through on the home front. On all levels--synodical, district, circuit, congregational--there must be persistent, loving, but firm efforts.

If the delegates fail to take home this sense of personal responsibility, the agony and the work and the prayer that went into these decisions will be of little avail.

Affirm is confident that the delegates who had the courage to make the decisions will also have the God-given stamina to see them through.

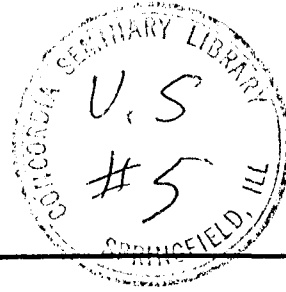
DELEGATES CAN OBTAIN FREE
COPIES OF:

WITH ONE VOICE

BY DR. PREUS
PRESIDENT OF LC-MS

THIS PAMPHLET CONTAINS A
REPRINT OF QUESTIONS AND
ANSWERS WHICH FIRST APPEAR-
ED IN THE LUTHERAN WITNESS

IT ALSO CONTAINS REV. H.
MUELLER'S ANALYSIS OF SOME
ASSERTIONS MADE IN THE
CONTROVERSY.



"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"

2 Cor. 4:13

SEP 22 1975 The Gerken Report

THE present status of the Tietjen case now has been further confused in many minds both by the public news media, which know little of church affairs, and also by some church papers, which know better, as they announced that Pastor Gerken "had been given the final disposition of the doctrinal charges against Dr. Tietjen," that Dr. Tietjen was "completely exonerated" and that he was "cleared of all false doctrine charges." None of these statements is true.

The case against Dr. Tietjen is a two-fold one. The first deals with his position on the St. Louis seminary faculty, the second must decide whether he is to remain in the ministry of our Synod. They are governed by totally separate procedures.

Therefore, the seminary Board of Control, having received charges against Dr. Tietjen involving both false doctrine and malfeasance in office, dealt only with the question of whether or not he should continue as president and faculty member. Weighted toward the protection of an accused professor, synodical procedure requires that before a Board of Control reaches its decision, the doctrinal questions at issue must be considered by Synod's top doctrinal committee (Commission on Theology and Church Relations) and then all charges must be evaluated by a faculty hearings committee. With these at hand, a Board of Control then conducts its own hearing. Dr. Tietjen was invited to participate in the activities of all three groups. He rejected them all.

The three committees, operating independently, worked carefully and prayerfully for 14 months before Dr. Tietjen was removed from office in October of 1974 on five counts of false doctrine and nine counts of malfeasance in office. This action is final and involved only his faculty position.

A completely different set of procedures is involved as the second phase of the case is entered, namely, the question of Dr. Tietjen's membership in Synod. As a first step, the charges, all evidence, and a verbatim transcript of the Board of Control's final decision meeting were forwarded to the Missouri district president, Dr. Herman Scherer. He disqualified himself and gave the case to the district first vice-president, the Rev. Oscar Gerken.

Now that his report has been given, the two pastors who originally filed the charges may appeal the case to synodical President Preus for possible referral to the Missouri District Commission of Adjudication. That body's decision, in turn, may be appealed by either party to Synod's Board of Appeals whose decision is final.

All of which is to say that the Gerken Report is only step one of a lengthy procedure and therefore has neither the weight nor the finality which unfortunately have been given to it in some circles.

But what about the Gerken Report itself? Regrettably, what could have been a valuable contribution to the Tietjen case merely compounds the difficulties by its serious doctrinal, logical, and procedural deficiencies.

For reasons not made clear, Pastor Gerken reached his personal conclusions in a one day interview. This was done in a case, it is to be noted, on which three competent groups had spent more than a year.

ONE also wonders why Pastor Gerken chose to deal only with the doctrinal charges since Article XIII of the Constitution under which he operated plainly states that expulsion from Synod may also result from "offensive conduct." The malfeasance charges clearly constitute such conduct and therefore necessarily must be included in considering Dr. Tietjen's position in the ministry of the church.

One is equally astonished that even though Pastor Gerken says he studied and found helpful the CTRC report, the Faculty Hearings Committee report, and the Board of Control transcript, he brushed all three aside in reaching his conclusions.

He dismissed the CTRC report because that group was "not acting as a judicial body." He disregards the fact that the doctrinal questions submitted to the CTRC were, in essence, the charges against Dr. Tietjen and that the CTRC found them to be false doctrine and contrary to Synod's doctrinal position.

Pastor Gerken's justification for disregarding the Faculty Hearings Committee report and the Board of Control's findings is that both were "addressed to the question of Dr. Tietjen's competence as President of Concordia Seminary," while his own assignment, as he viewed it, was "to determine whether Dr. John Tietjen was guilty of false doctrine." This astonishing distinction between Dr. Tietjen's competence as president and his teaching false doctrine is an impossible one. For the simple fact is that the primary consideration in removing Dr. Tietjen from the seminary presidency was precisely his false doctrine—held, defended, allowed, and fostered.

Procedurally, one also wonders why Pastor Gerken, in evaluating Dr. Tietjen's doctrinal position, did not also interview the two pastors who filed the charges and submitted the required supporting evidence. Pastor Gerken certainly should have held such an interview before finding their charges invalid.

A major concern, as one studies the Gerken Report, lies in his ability to clear Dr. Tietjen while at the same time conceding his departure from Synod's position in major areas. For example,

(Continued on page 8)

Synod's President: Difficult Days Ahead

THE leadership qualities of synodical President Preus are beyond dispute. Even those in disagreement with him concede his ability to set a firm course while at the same time maintaining the necessary flexibility to meet the turns of events which are necessarily involved in the day by day operation of a large church body, especially in days of doctrinal controversy.

Long and short terms goals, policy and procedure, convictions and casuistry, doctrine and practice—these are kept in careful balance under good leadership.

That Dr. Preus has been and will continue to be criticized (often on the same day) for being as inflexible as an iron rod and as rubbery as wet spaghetti is as certain as the roundness of the earth. That mistakes have been made he would be the first to agree, and this, too, is a leadership quality.

The growth and maturity of Dr. Preus' leadership were clearly apparent at Anaheim to all who recalled the uncertain days in 1969 when he was thrust into the presidency by a Synod which finally saw, however reluctantly, that its former president either could not or would not take positive steps to deal with the growing discouragement, confusion, and conflict spreading through Synod as a result of a twenty-year creeping tide of doctrinal liberalism.

Keeping a convention fair, loving, and yet firm, when far-reaching and emotion-packed decisions cannot be avoided or postponed is an awesome assignment. Dr. Preus accomplished the task with efficiency and honor. To be sure, occasionally conservative delegates groaned as he bent backwards to an amazing degree in his desire to show fairness to those who disagreed with the will of the majority and at times quite obviously used parliamentary procedure and even prayer in efforts to delay or thwart that will.

AS Dr. Preus enters the last half of his second term of office, an evaluation of the previous six years must lead to the conclusion that his batting average in some very difficult synodical innings has been good indeed.

But the ball game is far from over and these next two years will demand the best that is in him as the controversy now has shifted from the St. Louis seminary to the districts and therefore also to the congregational grass-roots. The seminary Board of Control, in drawing the line on the doctrinal laxity of its faculty, patiently and perseveringly held to both the doctrinal position and the procedures of Synod. The school is now in a new era, with a new president, a new faculty, a new student body, and a new spirit of love and openness under obedience to the Word of God.

The convention recognized the fact that our major problem now centers in those district presidents who previously have broken their oath of office by placing into Missouri Synod parishes pastors who have not been approved for our ministry. At Anaheim these men refused to acknowledge their past sins and rejected the loving offer of forgiveness. Even worse, they also declared in a joint statement their intention to continue the illegitimate ordinations, despite the unmistakable synodical repudiation of their chaotic course. Making good their threat, several district presidents have ordained additional unqualified men since the convention.

IN what must certainly be a tribute to Dr. Preus' fairness and leadership, the synodical convention placed this difficult matter squarely on his shoulders. Dr. Preus is to exercise pastoral care and discipline. If the district presidents continue their rebellious

acts, he is authorized to notify their respective districts that the position of district president is vacant. Likewise, in Dr. Preus' hands is the authority to act with regard to those congregations which have accepted men who are not qualified for pastorates in the Missouri Synod.

Dr. Preus' pastoral approach to problems assures the church that there will be no precipitous or vindictive action taken with respect to either the district presidents or the parishes. And this is as it should be.

On the other hand, the district presidents in question clearly threw down the gauntlet to Synod at the convention in a brazen act of rebellion which, as far as we know, is unprecedented in the history of our church body. In any area the words of our Lord hold true that a house divided against itself cannot stand. Synod as we have known it for over a century simply cannot survive if men who have sworn to uphold the constitution and our mutually agreed upon procedures are permitted to flaunt and violate them with impunity. No government, no family, and no church can tolerate chaos and anarchy and still hope to survive and prosper.

The Synod recognizes this and therefore the convention both honored and burdened the synodical president with the responsibility of dealing with the matter and also established the necessary authority and procedure to do so.

Dr. Preus certainly regrets the rebellion of these men and his need to deal with it. It must surely sadden him, for it is a sad situation indeed. But when action is called for, Dr. Preus previously has shown his willingness to act. He will not complain about the burden nor will he flinch from the task. This is not a question of strategy or expediency. It is a clear issue of right and wrong.

The Missouri Synod being what it is, Dr. Preus knows that he has our support, our encouragement, and our prayers.

The Reverend Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Quincy, Illinois

Affirm

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The Bible And/Or The Constitution?

WHICH shall it be: "the Bible *and* the Constitution" or "the Bible *or* the Constitution?" There are those who are trying to drive a wedge between the Scripture and the Constitution, trying to pit the one against the other. The eight recalcitrant district presidents (in their printed reply to Resolution 5-02 of the Anaheim Convention) and other Elimites are saying that they can ignore and violate and disregard the Constitution in favor of the Scriptures, and that they are even compelled to do so, since the Constitution of Synod is opposed to the Word of God.

The Constitution Applies Scripture

But the rest of Synod has always believed and still is now convinced that her Constitution and Bylaws simply reflect and apply the Biblical principles and the directives which God has given us in His Word to our day and to our church. Articles II and III of the Constitution set this fact out in very clear and unmistakable language. And so I submit that the Constitution of Synod is not at variance with the Scripture and that it cannot with intellectual honesty be pitted against the Scripture. On the contrary, it expresses Biblical concepts in terms that speak to contemporary needs. It conforms to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. And it is only those who wish to allow deviations from the Scripture who would wish to challenge that fact.

Decency and Order

Scripture, the Word of God, urges us to do everything "decently and in order" in Christ's church. I would therefore urge and even beg those district presidents and their Elimite conferees to honor the vows they made to their God and to their church to honor, uphold, apply and implement the Constitution, Bylaws and resolutions of the church which elected them to their offices, instead of trying to frustrate them. That church, in her Constitution, has obligated the district presidents to "See to it that all resolutions of the Synod which concern the districts are made known to the Districts and are carried out by them." (Article XII, 9, a.) The Constitution also explicitly states "The Synod at all times has the right to call its officers to account and, if circumstances require it, to remove them from office in accordance with Christian procedure." (Article XI, A, 1.) Thereby the Constitution is merely trying to guarantee to the members of the church that everything will be done "decently and in order."

Such Sophistry

Let me briefly outline the series of arguments that have been used to arrive at such a fantastic dichotomy between Scripture and the Constitution.

One—The dissidents claim that the authority of the district presidents is not derived from the central power of the national convention but from their districts. But that one won't wash at all. For Synod, from the very start and always through her history, has been empowered to divide herself into districts or to combine districts and never has she given that authority to an individual district. The same is true of all other authority vested in the district presidents—that has always been an authority delegated by Synod to the districts through the president of Synod, never an authority vested in the districts alone. That's simply historical fact and undeniable. Let's not try to rewrite the constitutional history of Synod!

Two—When that argument falls, the dissidents try another. They have the effrontery to claim that they are acting in accord with Synod's tradition when they defy the Constitution and Bylaws. And, when that claim is demonstrated to be patently false (by reference to the Synod's 1881 convention at the time of the predestinarian controversy, cf. the Preamble to Res. 2-12 of the New Orleans Convention), they revert to still another line of reasoning.

Three—They claim that the Bylaws of Synod's Constitution are not binding but that the Constitution is. Jaech, for instance, refers to the "Doubtful bylaw(s), Questionable bylaws(s)" (in his 2-minute speech to the Anaheim Convention.) And Jacobs claimed "The bylaws in question (4.15a, 1&2) were never intended for this most extraordinary situation" (in his 2-minute speech). But that is precisely the purpose of a constitution and bylaws. They are not needed primarily for ordinary situations. It is the extraordinary ones which they are especially intended to cover. And the claim that the Constitution has to be kept, but that the Bylaws can be broken is simply contrary to parliamentary law, which states that the only difference between Constitution and Bylaws is that the former is more difficult to amend. (Cf. *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, 1970, pp. 11-12.)

Four—When none of those arguments will wash, the dissidents come with this one—that the Constitution is opposed to Scripture. Hecht asked, for instance, "Does a Bylaw take precedence over Holy Scripture?" (in his 2-minute speech). But I submit again that Synod has always been persuaded that the *Handbook* (the Constitution and Bylaws) expresses our Biblical and confessional faith, protects the church from error and false doctrine and is an expression of our Christian ethical responsibility, all their protestations to the contrary notwithstanding. The eight district presidents in the response to Synod's action (Resolution 5-02 of the Anaheim Convention) claim that such an action of Synod is "a serious breach of the Holy Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, and the synodical constitution." Thereby they are declaring their church to be heretical, accusing her of false doctrine and unethical or unChristian conduct. This is a serious charge. Instead of demonstrating to the church that they are not violating the Constitution and are not espousing or condoning false doctrine, they accuse the whole church of being sub-biblical, unLutheran and heretical. This kind of defiance is intolerable.

Threat of Schism

Their attempt to create a schism (dichotomy) between the Bible and the Constitution has failed. But, if they persist in it, it may well lead to a schism in the church, as they threaten. If they insist on supporting those who espouse false doctrine in the church (denying the inspiration of Scripture, predictive prophecy, Old Testament and/or New Testament miracles, the Virgin Birth, the resurrection from the dead, etc.), then they will be guilty of effecting such a schism.

The Rev. Marcus T. Lang, Pastor
St. James Lutheran Church
Lafayette, Indiana

Affirm's Mailing List

If you have friends to whom you want *Affirm* sent, please inform us. We will be happy to place them on our mailing list.

To comply with postal mailing regulations *AFFIRM'S* mailing list is arranged numerically according to Zip Code Number.

Therefore, it would be helpful to us if names were ARRANGED NUMERICALLY ACCORDING TO ZIP CODE NUMBERS, AND ALPHABETICALLY UNDER EACH ZIP CODE. This will enable us to check easily to determine if the names submitted are already on our mailing list, and eliminate duplicate mailings.

It would also be helpful if names and addresses were printed clearly or typewritten.

Congregational Autonomy

IN June, 1927, Dr. Wm. Arndt delivered an essay to the convention of the North Dakota and Montana District the title of which was "Die Lehre vom Beruf" (The Doctrine of the Call).¹ Several paragraphs of this essay are directly pertinent to the discussion currently going on in Synod relative to congregational autonomy in the matter of calling a pastor. These paragraphs are herewith given in translation.

Jesus [in Matthew 28:19-20] entrusts both the Word of God and Baptism to those who belong to Him. And those who belong to Him are precisely the church, the Christian congregation. That the church has God's Word and the Sacraments also St. Paul affirms when in I Corinthians 3:21 he exclaims: "All things are yours" . . . Luther regarded this truth as very important in deciding the question, into whose hands his God put the calling of His servants. He writes (xix, p. 1283):

Where there is a holy Christian church, there all the Sacraments, Christ Himself, and the Holy Ghost must be. Were we to be a holy Christian church and have the greatest and most necessary things such as God's Word, Christ, Spirit, faith, prayer, Baptism, Sacrament, Keys, office, etc., and not also have the lesser thing, namely the power and right to call some into office who administer to us the Word, Baptism, Sacrament, what kind of a church would that be to me? (p. 17)

[The congregation] is the instrument through which Jesus places people in His service. That already indicates that the congregation dare not proceed arbitrarily. In this matter she does not simply have a free hand. If the pastor were the servant only of the congregation, then one could say that the congregation has the full right to act here according to her own discretion . . . but, since the pastor above all is the servant of Jesus Christ, it is up to Jesus to say what qualifications he who would work in His church must have. [I Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:6-9]. (p. 29)

It has frequently been maintained that a congregation cannot issue a valid call unless the President of the Synod or some other representative of the church body concurs and approves the call. This is completely untenable. Synods . . . the offices of President and Circuit Counselor are all by human arrangement. It is not prescribed in God's Word that there must be such organizations and offices . . . the approval of the President or of the Circuit Counselor is therefore not necessary in order to make a call valid. (p. 23)

Hereby it must not be denied that it is an excellent human ordinance which we as members of the Synod should carefully observe and follow, that in matters pertaining to a call we seek the advice of District officers. (p. 23)

In these paragraphs Dr. Arndt works with a very important distinction. He distinguishes between that which a congregation has a *right* to do because it is Christian and that which a congregation *agrees* to do as a member of Synod. A congregation, by reason of the fact that it is made up of *Christians*, has the right to call a pastor subject only to the directives of God's Word; a congregation, however, by reason of the fact that it is a *member of the Synod* will honor the agreements it voluntarily made when it affiliated itself with the other congregations in a larger organization for the benefit of all.

PRESUMABLY, when a congregation becomes a member of Synod, it does so in full knowledge of the terms of the relationship which it has entered. Congregations are aware that Synod has a constitution and bylaws which regulate the corporate life of its membership. Congregations are aware that Synod in delegate convention may adopt such bylaws as seem necessary from time to time to further the objectives for which Synod was founded. Congregations are aware that the Constitution (Article VII) stipulates only two conditions under which a congregation may disregard synodical resolutions, namely, if they are not in accordance with the Word of God or if they are not applicable to the congregation's situation. Manifestly, it is not contrary to the Scriptures for Synod to establish policies governing the admission of candidates into the pastoral office.

(Bylaw 4.01 and 4.15). Manifestly, no congregation can rightfully claim that such policies are not applicable to its situation since every congregation has the duty to establish the pastoral office in its midst. Two questions arise at this point. Should a congregation have joined the Synod in the first place if it regards certain conditions of membership as an un-Scriptural limitation of its autonomy? Has a congregation kept faith with its fellow congregations if *subsequent* to joining Synod it rejects synodical policies that are in accordance with the Word of God and applicable to all congregations?

WHEN a congregation *voluntarily* affiliated itself with Synod and *freely* agrees to conduct its affairs in accordance with stated and known policies and understands from the outset that it is a condition of membership in Synod that such policies be respected, then it cannot justly complain of interference with its autonomy when it is expected merely to keep its word.

With respect to a district, whether it takes action by convention resolution or at the direction of its elected officers, there can be no question about the binding nature of synodical policies in the conduct of its affairs. The Constitution clearly provides that a district may pass only such resolutions as do not conflict with the Constitution and the Bylaws of Synod (Article XII). Bylaw 3.07 of the synodical *Handbook* explicitly states: "The Synod is not merely an advisory body in relation to a District. A District is the Synod itself performing the functions of the Synod. Resolutions of the Synod are binding on the Districts." When district officers accept their positions in full knowledge of this provision it is a violation of trust if they act in accordance with the wishes of their constituency when these are opposed to synodical policies.

The Reverend Harry A. Huth, Pastor
St. John Lutheran Church
Rice Lake, Wisconsin

Editorial Policy

While the articles in *Affirm* with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

1. At the request of the convention this essay was published in a separate pamphlet by Success Printing Co., St. Louis. See also an essay on the same topic by Dr. Arndt in the *Concordia Theological Monthly*, May, 1954.

A Time To Think

WITHIN the next several months some individuals and congregations within Synod are going to be faced with the necessity of making a very important decision. Although some may not be aware of it, it is one which will have far reaching effects, one which could drastically alter the lives of those involved. The decision ??? Whether or not to remain with ELIM, especially if it means leaving the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Until recently joining ELIM has, in many instances, been done more on the basis of emotions than on a solid evaluation of the facts. A seminary president was suspended—a faculty and student body walked out and as a result the professors lost their jobs—mission staff personnel resigned in protest over policy matters—these and similar events were charged with emotion. It was easy to have one's sympathy aroused by the thought of a professor's family leaving a home on campus or students electing to leave the facilities provided them by the members of Synod. It was sad to see young men graduate and then not get placed, even though they may have been wrong. It was easy to get angry at synodical officials, especially the president, because they represented the voice of Synod, which had spoken on these matters.

ELIM was a product of those times, born, not on the basis of confession, but of protest. As such it could be argued that it had a legitimate place, even though there are regular channels available for that purpose. It did provide an opportunity for those who thought that New Orleans had spoken harshly to band together and raise their voices in unison. Many were drawn to the organization at that time, and many more aligned themselves with its stated purpose in the emotionally packed months that followed.

PERHAPS all would have been well had the purpose of this organization remained unchanged. But suddenly events transpired which indicated that this was not to be the case. Suddenly a rival seminary called Seminex, carefully planned months in advance, came into being. Suddenly an agency entitled "Partners in Mission" sprang into existence. Soon the seminary had graduates, and as a result placement procedures were formulated and placement officers named. Ordinations which were in violation of the synodical Constitution were performed. Congregations and pastors were unabashedly circularized in a request for financial support.

Suddenly the organization which started as a protest movement had for all intents and purposes become a church, even though it remained within another church from which it received many benefits. It was performing those functions which congregations had delegated to Synod, and it was carrying them out in violation of the Constitution and Bylaws which these congregations had agreed to follow.

Perhaps you joined ELIM in its infancy, maybe you became a member later on—or you might even be thinking of joining at the present time. Whatever the case might be, you will soon be faced with a decision. Unless a miracle occurs, it appears almost inevitable that a breakaway group will come into being during the next year. All signs point in this direction, whether the organization be ELIM or LCM (Lutheran Church in Mission) or some group not yet named. Whatever the case may be, you will have to decide whether you want to stay or leave. And this is not a decision to be made on the basis of emotion. Rather, it is one calling for soul searching thought. Examine the facts—and examine them carefully.

WHAT kind of a church body will you be joining? Admittedly, it is a very close knit group now, filled with enthusiasm and ex-

citement. But is this the case because you now have a cause, you are fighting for dispossessed profs and graduates who have not been placed? What will happen when you have your own church—when all the profs have jobs and all the graduates have an opportunity for placement within your organization?? What will you gather around then???

A mission program?? Is the ELIM mission effort really so different from that in the LCMS? There are dozens of congregations within Synod who have programs similar to those proposed by Partners in Mission. Will that hold you all together?

The Gospel? Do you mean to tell us that the Gospel is not being preached and taught within the LCMS at the present time? And which Gospel will you gather around, that which proclaims that only those who accept Jesus Christ as their Savior will go to heaven or the one that says that those who have never heard the Gospel will also attain eternal glory?

Freedom from the oppression of the Bylaws of Synod and the power of the president?? Then I would advise you to study the proposed constitution of the LCM (Lutheran Church in Mission) very carefully. Notice how often the requirement for obeying the bylaws of LCM is mentioned. Study the organizational structure, and see how much power has been placed in the hands of the president, the directors, bishops, and council of bishops. LCMS congregations have much more power and autonomy.

IF these are what you are depending upon for unity, then you are missing that one thing that had, in the past, made the LCMS a close knit and caring organization. That cement which ELIM does not have is a clear doctrinal and theological position. It is quite evident, in examining recent ELIM Resolution 75-9, "Here We Stand," that such a position is not in the offing. This resolution stating that one of the strongest desires indicated in the survey made among ELIM members was for a clear statement of theological and doctrinal position. Yet this same resolution concludes by stating that such a formal statement is not needed!!! WHY??? Is it not because the leaders of ELIM realize that there is such a wide diversity of theological beliefs within the organization that it would be impossible to agree on a confessional statement which had any real meaning? Any attempt to do so would tear ELIM apart. Yet someday that question must be faced. Do you want to be a part of that?

A time for thought! Are you at odds with Synod on the basis of theology—or has yours an emotional basis? If you can no longer agree with theological statements of Synod, then you may be justified in being with ELIM. But if you have allowed your heart alone to lead you—if your feelings have brought you to this point—then be careful. You may find that your second condition will be much worse than the first. Think it over!

Professor Richard G. Korthals, M.S.
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On the News Front

PERHAPS few events of Anaheim caused a greater stir than the publication of *Affirm's* list of candidates recommended for election to Synod's various offices. Some facts seem almost too obvious to mention, but perhaps they need repetition. First, both the conservatives and those with liberal inclinations published lists at New Orleans, and criticism from people connected with ELIM of the publication of a list at Anaheim seems, in the light of history, an academic question. Then, too, all delegates have a right to know the most decisive fact about those nominated, a fact not contained in the official information printed about them. That fact is the theological stance of the candidates as it can be determined to the best of anyone's ability.

Moreover, by suggesting that the conservative vote not be split among various suitable candidates, but focussed on one candidate, it again seemed possible that the election of conservative candidates would be, humanly speaky, made more certain.

When it published its guide to the elections, *Affirm* in its editorial explanation of the guide also clearly stated, "The following election guide by no means includes all the capable conservative Bible-based and Christ-centered candidates who could serve as nominees! In some instances many conservative nominees are available. But a choice had to be made ONLY to offset the moderate attempt at floor nominations. Various conservatives graciously stepped aside for the sake of the cause and deserve our gratitude."

One conservative publication which commented at some length about the list made two points, among others, which should help clarify the whole matter.

Delegates who wish our church to remain a confessional and doctrinally sound church consider *Affirm* a reliable source of information on the candidates because of *Affirm's* consistent confessional position.

Note also that *Affirm* urged delegates to vote independently, to make their own decision, while at the same time pointing out that *Affirm* was submitting its own evaluations. In other words, "Use the list for what it is worth to you."

THE conservative point was made very clearly by Francis A. Schaeffer in an address delivered at the International Congress on World Evangelization in Lausanne, Switzerland, July, 1974. He stated,

Martin Luther said:

"If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved, and to be steady on all the battle front besides is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point."

In our day that point is the question of Scripture. Holding to a strong view of Scripture or not holding to it is the watershed of the evangelical world.

The first direction in which we must face is to say most lovingly but clearly: Evangelicalism is not consistently evangelical unless there is a line drawn between those who take a full view of Scripture and those who do not.

AFTER giving the matter a good deal of consideration *Affirm* decided not to recite the events of the Anaheim convention in its first post-convention issue nor at any other time. First of all, the actions of the convention have been widely publicized in the secular press, the religious press—including most district publications of a conservative nature, and through magazine reports of the Anaheim events. Moreover, the fact that its first post-convention issue would appear some time after these events and that other developments would inevitably occur in the interval, further reinforced the decision not to review the highly important Anaheim actions item by item.

On the News Front: (Continued from Page 6)

Finally, it seemed obvious that during the course of its future issues *Affirm* would, in one way or another, because of new developments cover the essential Anaheim story. In fact, the articles in this first issue reflect and comment on some of the Anaheim decisions.

All of this thinking was predicated on a more basic conclusion: that *Affirm* would need to continue to publish after Anaheim, because the struggle in Missouri would likely be intensified and take on new dimensions. New Orleans provided the theological resolutions which clarified for our age what Missouri stands for. Anaheim proved the logical sequel: its resolutions applied the theological truths of the Bible, so clearly enunciated at New Orleans, to the practical life of the church. Based on the Bible, the Anaheim majority formulated conclusions about the actions which now must follow, if the church is to remain faithful to the Word and conclude the struggle in its midst in a God-pleasing manner.

This means that the scene of the struggle has, in one sense, shifted. It is no longer the seminary which is the arena, but it is the administrative structure of Missouri and, most particularly, the districts and the congregations where the struggle will focus during the coming months. The issue will be determined on the grass roots level by laymen and clergy alike. It is chiefly to these new dimensions of the conflict that *Affirm* hopes to speak in the immediate future.

AFFIRM has received occasional requests for information on the certification of Seminex graduates for the ministry. At the time of the faculty and student walkout from our St. Louis seminary in February of 1974, it was suggested that some students did not fully realize the implications of their actions. From many quarters there came encouragement that the seminary faculty make every effort to encourage the 1974 Seminex graduates to seek certification for the ministry by way of a special interview process. Walking the extra mile, the seminary staff and faculty devoted much time and effort to this project.

The latest statistics show that since the special program was begun in May 1974, 29 men have been interviewed. Twenty of these have been endorsed by the St. Louis faculty, three were found to be ineligible because they have not completed the necessary academic requirements, five men are still being processed in the hope that subsequent conversations will reveal a more positive attitude, and one man has been declined. His case may now be considered by a special interview committee set up by the Council of Presidents on May 3, 1974. Final determination is to be made by the faculty.

The St. Louis seminary faculty is to be commended for its willingness to hold the door open to these students while at the same time maintaining the integrity of our synodical regulations.

THE gremlins got into *Affirm* in the form of a pricing error. *Affirm* suggested, in its last issue that its readers might be interested in the *Lay Lectures* sponsored by Concordia seminary, which were exceptionally well received by large groups of people. It stated that printed copies of all twelve lectures are available at \$1.50. The truth is, they are available at \$2.50. *Affirm* hopes you have not been inconvenienced by this mistake.

Orders should be sent to "Office of Continuing Education, Concordia Seminary, 801 De Mun Avenue, St. Louis, Mo. 63105." Please include your remittance with the order.

ONE of our conservative clergy was good enough to share with *Affirm* a quotation from Martin Chemnitz's *Examination of the Council of Trent*, pages 566-567,

For when this general foundation, which concludes that whatever is divinely revealed in the Word of God is true and certain, is not present or wavers, trust in the promise of divine mercy which forgives sins for Christ's sake, can neither be conceived, nor retained in conflict...

On the News Front: (Continued from Page 7)

"Faith means to give assent to the whole Word of God that is set before us, and in it to the promise of the gratuitous reconciliation bestowed for the sake of Christ the Mediator." For we do not approve the opinion of the Marcionite Apelles, who, in Eusebius, argues that it does no harm if someone either simply does not believe or corruptly believes the other parts of the Word of God which belong to the foundation, so long as he believes in Christ crucified.

ANOTHER pastor sent along a copy of the *Digest* published by The National Laymen's Council of The Church League of America, Chicago, Illinois. The August 15, 1975 issue of this publication contains a listing of the "organizations...represented at the founding of the Angela Davis organization." The *Digest* states that these organizations "met in Chicago in May, 1973 to form the new umbrella and Communist-supervised organization known as the National Alliance against Racist and Political Repression with three identified Communist party members as the co-chairpersons, including the black Communist, Angela Davis, and four of the five-member executive committee identified Communist party members, also."

Among those listed on the first page of that issue is *Walther League—Lutheran Youth Organization, 119 W. Locust, Chicago, Illinois*. It is actions like these which have alarmed Missouri's conservatives about their more liberal fellow church members.

(GERKEN (Continued from page one))

Pastor Gerken states candidly, "Dr. Tietjen's understanding of the word 'inerrancy' does not coincide with Synod's traditional definition of this term, i.e., that the Holy Spirit preserved the biblical writers from making errors in the writing of the Scriptures." Again, "I am still bothered by the statement, 'The Gospel gives the Scriptures their normative character, not vice versa' for it seems to me that such a statement makes the truthfulness of your Scriptures dependent upon its Gospel content rather than upon the fact that God, who does not lie, speaks to us through His written Word." Again, "The quotations from the Apology of the Augsburg Confession do not say what Dr. Tietjen understands them to say." Finally, with reference to the first chapters of Genesis, Pastor Gerken points out that Dr. Tietjen does not believe that "all the statements" of these chapters "must be understood literally."

The point is this: how Pastor Gerken can find Dr. Tietjen at

such variance with the doctrinal position of Synod and still conclude that he is qualified for the ministry is simply beyond comprehension.

While based on an obviously sincere desire to function pastorally, the Report's defects in doctrine and procedure are major. It was done too hastily, involving one interview with only one party to the case. Its conclusions, based on oral assurances rather than on documentation, substitute personal opinion for objective standards.

To weigh the Gerken Report is to find it wanting.

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WALTHER MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

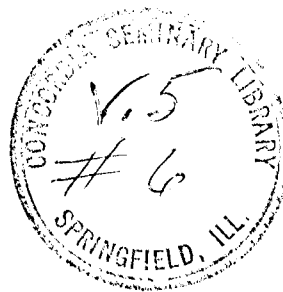
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Volume V, No. 6
October 15, 1975

"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"

2 Cor. 4:13

What Does Preus Want?

TO ignore the recent letter of Missouri's president to his "Brothers and Sisters in Christ" would be to ignore a major piece of the current history which our church is now writing.

But to grasp what the Preus paragraphs say and mean is wholly another matter.

And to analyze the response which his letter has drawn across the nation and will continue to draw is to analyze what was wholly predictable.

Perhaps no more puzzling document has been written by a man who served as a leader of the conservative cause in our time.

His first major statement, "To put it bluntly, I find myself moving more into the middle because of words and deeds by both extremes that I simply do not like."

He does not define the "middle" toward which he is moving. By his own assertions since the letter, he has not moved at all from his past, sound theological position. So he has not drifted to some vague intellectual or theological middle.

The only other major possibility which seems to exist is that he feels himself moving toward a "political" middle—that he wants to reconcile somehow at this last moment a church desperately divided within itself.

But that middle doesn't exist.

ONE aftermath of the letter is that nine district presidents have declared themselves to be in a similar middle position.

But a "political middle," trying to reconcile both parties to the struggle, must be related to a theological middle or it has no meaning whatsoever.

Scores of efforts have been made under the Preus regime, many initiated by Preus himself, to find a common ground to hold Missouri together. The Board of Directors have tried; the Council of Presidents have tried; special committees have tried. A huge convocation tried in the months before the convention.

No effort succeeded because the two parties to the struggle could not find a common theological ground on which to resolve their differences.

Any political middle which claims to be holding to the theology Missouri has always held to will come dangerously close to compromising that theology, if it does not actually compromise it.

Should the Preus statement mean that he still wants to exercise all the power of his office to bring about a resurgence of Christian love in Missouri, he has a laudatory goal.

But love does not turn its back on God's Word.

Love acts to help the erring brother find his way back to God and truth.

LOVE and patience are indeed great virtues—and it behooves all Christians to go the second mile in the hope of trying to find the reconciling word which will by the grace of God open the

eyes of those who stumble down a path God doesn't want them to walk.

Love can never be separated from the theology of love which began with the promise God made the first people in Eden and culminated in the life and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Luther writes,

There is no comparison at all between doctrine and life. "One dot" of doctrine is worth more "than heaven and earth" (Matthew 5:18); therefore we do not permit the slightest offense against it. But we can be lenient towards errors of life. For we, too, err daily in our lives and conduct; so do all the saints . . . but by the grace of God our doctrine is pure; we have all the articles of faith solidly established in sacred scriptures. The devil would dearly love to corrupt and overthrow these; that is why he attacks us so cleverly with this specious argument about not offending against love and harmony among the churches. (*American Edition of Luther*, Vol. 27, pages 41-42.)

So the puzzle remains.

What middle does Preus want?

At what point does he think he is?

HE castigates two extremes in his letter, "The one extreme appears to be overconcerned with punitive and vindictive actions, rather than the mission of the church. The other extreme seems to speak only of split, again, to the detriment of our mission."

Whom Preus means by "vindictive and punitive people" is part of the letter's puzzle. If a few, here and there, are vindictive and punitive, they need to be scored.

But like Preus, the great conservative group has not been vindictive and punitive nor is it today. It simply stands where Missouri has always stood. Its Anaheim resolutions, which Preus himself helped to pass, are only a loving extension of the theology conservatives have stood for.

Those who want to "split" are of course in the ELIM camp.

The Rev. Samuel Roth, ELIM's president, rejects the Preus plea in an open letter and states,

While we stand in awe of your political savvy, you will understand if we find it hard to take seriously your claim (once again) to be "in the middle". We doubt frankly if even your supporters will find that credible . . . You may have had a true change of heart since Anaheim . . . If so, may God forgive me. But until actions, not words, prove me wrong, I will have to act on my own convictions.

(Continued on page 8)

A Marriage or A Mirage?

"SHE is a good student. She is an accomplished athlete. She is honest with others. She is considerate toward her parents. She is attractive. She constantly does things for other people." With these words Jim was trying to persuade his roommate Tom to date a particular girl. Tom, a sensitive and studious person, who for sometime had been hoping to meet the perfect girl, quickly replied: "O.K. You make the arrangements."

The next morning dawned with special brightness for Tom as he anticipated meeting the girl whom Jim had described. As he walked across campus in this jovial mood, he saw his favorite teacher, Professor Lewis, who had served as his counselor during the past few years, walking nearby. Quickly Tom ran over to his teacher and shared his excitement at the prospect of dating such a girl. As Tom talked on he noted that an expression of concern had slowly come over Professor Lewis' face. "Is something wrong?" he asked. "Well, Tom . . ." came the reply. "I must be honest and say that I overheard a conversation concerning this girl in the faculty lounge. Several professors have had to fail her due to her poor performance. Not only this, but in their efforts to help her they found that she repeatedly lied or sought to blame her parents for her poor performance. The women's coach even said that this girl had accused her of prejudice when it was necessary to drop her from the swimming team due to her slow times." Suddenly Tom's attitude changed; he found himself walking away without properly saying, "Farewell!" His disappointment came out when he met Jim in the lunch-line. "Are you certain about that girl?" "Yes!" Jim answered, "My most reliable friends told me about her, but unfortunately they say that she has left school, so I'll have to find someone else for you."

Perhaps, if the story ends here, Tom will never know whether that girl might have been the perfect one for him.

Sad as this projected, personal situation is, think how much more wretched Tom would be if his spiritual condition were very similar! What if God was for Tom a person concerning whom he had conflicting reports? What if there were no report which stood out as reliable and truthful?

IF we accept the portrait which *historical-critical* exegetes draw of how God revealed Himself to us, then that is exactly the position Tom finds himself in. It is the position which we are all forced to assume. The Bible, for the *historical-critical* exegete, is a mixture of reports which are true and reports which are to a greater or lesser extent false. Thus, Tom, as he reads the Bible, and seeks to determine who God is, according to the *historical-critical* exegete, must forever ask whether the reports are reliable or the mere product of the pious imagination of later generations as they reflected on the things that they had heard about. Just as it is possible that one professor wrongly began all the rumors concerning Tom's prospective date, so the *historical-critical* scholar argues that the apostles and prophets may have been mistaken and wrongly reported what God said and did. For example: The Scriptures state that Adam and Eve were historic individuals, but enthusiasts of the Historical-Critical Method argue that the apostles were simply not aware (as we are) that mankind came from a long evolutionary process. The Scriptures claim that Jesus was born of a virgin, but proponents of the Historical-Critical Method say that this may simply be the pious embellishment of a later generation. The Scriptures portray Jesus as turning water into wine at Cana, but the majority of Historical-Critical scholars doubt whether anything extraordinary occurred on that festive day long ago.

Thus, just as Tom met two interpretations of the girl he was to date and had no way to decide which was the truth, so he meets two descriptions of who God is and what He has done. Further,

he seemingly has no way to discern which is the truth. In brief, the chance of a future marriage to a possible bride is ruled out, because the girl has become an ever elusive mirage. The possibility of a spiritual marriage to the true God is ruled out because He too has become a mere mirage concerning whom no one knows anything for sure.

ALL of this follows if Tom looks at the Scriptures through the glasses of the Historical-Critical Method. But, one must first ask if those are the glasses which fit Tom or anyone. Are Historical-Critical lenses provided by the Scriptures themselves? The most forthright of the historical-critical scholars themselves admit that this way of viewing the Scriptures is alien to the Bible itself. Hence James Barr, a scholar who has accepted the Historical-Critical Method, in describing God's direct, verbal communication with man in the burning bush event, writes:

We, may, of course, argue from a critical view point that the stories of such dialogues arose in fact as inference from a divine act already known and believed . . . All I want to say is that, if we do this, we do it on critical grounds and not on Biblical grounds, *for this is not how the Biblical narrative represents the event*. In fact, the verbal self-declaration of Yahweh in that great passage, Exodus 3, has as much independent standing in the esteem of the traditionists as the crossing of the Red Sea had. (Italics added)

With this fact in mind, Tom can return to the Scriptures, and, by employing its own glasses, come to a sure and certain knowledge of who God is and what He has done. Tom will everywhere find that the Scriptures represent God as revealing Himself truthfully and reliably. God acts and people behold. God speaks and people hear and understand.

Now, if we turn to the recent history of our Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, we find that the dispute is over precisely this question: "Is Tom to view the Scriptures through its own lenses or through the glasses of the Historical-Critical Method?" It is plain to see that a decision here will *necessarily determine* how one views God, Christ, and every other teaching in the Christian faith. It is no accident that Hosea speaks of Israel as God's wife and that Christ speaks of the church as His bride. In both cases, this marriage imagery conveys the truth that God knows His own and is known by them. This knowledge is possible because God communicates with man in an accurate and reliable fashion. The Scriptures offer no fleeting mirage. They offer a marriage to the living God.

In light of this, anyone who steps to the fore and says that our synodical dispute is of a *political* rather than a *doctrinal* nature is simply ignorant of what the Historical-Critical Method entails or is desirous of keeping others ignorant by not revealing its far-flung implications. The disagreements in our church have been and remain to be over fundamental doctrinal issues. Perhaps when the spirit of our age and many a churchman simply want to ignore doctrinal differences for the sake of a superficial, secular harmony, we should again pay heed to Martin Luther when he said:

If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not *confessing* Christ however boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved, and to be steady on all the battle front besides is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point.

Professor Dean O. Wenthe
Concordia Seminary
Springfield, Illinois

Conscience, District President, and Bylaws

THE controversy in Synod is basically doctrinal. At its root is a method of Bible interpretation which strikes at the uniqueness, inerrancy and authority of Scripture. Literally, no doctrine, including the virgin birth and resurrection of Jesus, is safe. A fruit of 17th century rationalism in Germany, some 20 years ago it began infecting some of our seminary professors and then made its way into our pulpits and congregations.

The doctrinal character of the problem needs constant emphasis. In the very nature of the case, many side issues develop. The latest distraction to be introduced is the question of "conscience."

Both at Anaheim and since then, conscience has been given as the justification for violating our constitutional bylaws and refusing to adhere to synodical resolutions. A district president who approves the idea of ordaining men unqualified and uncertified for the LC-MS ministry insists that his conscience moves him to do so. ELIMites who continue to foster a church within a church, despite a synodical resolution to the contrary, claim to do so "as a matter of conscience."

Is this a valid use of "conscience"? Toward an answer to the question, a review of the nature and function of conscience is in order.

Conscience, it must be remembered, is judicial, not legislative. That is, conscience is like a judge who does not make the law but simply renders a decision on the basis of what has been placed on the lawbooks by others. Thus conscience approves or disapproves our actions on the basis of what we previously have accepted as being right or wrong. A boy who has been taught from little on that eating an orange is sinful will have a troubled conscience if he eats one.

SINCE conscience judges by what is "on the books," it is only as valid as the laws it goes by. A conscience therefore can be mistaken, it can err—remember the boy and his orange. Conscience can only be absolutely sure when its decision is based on the unerring Word of God. The Bible says I shall not steal. When I steal, my conscience troubles me. Its judgment is valid because God's Word is valid. At the Diet of Worms, Luther's basic point in refusing to recant was that his conscience was bound by the Word of God.

A third principle is that it is wrong to go against one's conscience. This is true regardless whether the judgment of conscience in a specific case is valid or erring. In the case of the boy and his orange, if he eats the orange he is sinning, not because it is wrong to eat an orange but because he is violating and sinning against his conscience.

Let us apply this to the present situation. Synod has bylaws which very specifically and clearly establish the requirements governing admission to the ministry of the Missouri Synod. With us for many years, these regulations are there for the protection of our congregations. From its very beginning Synod has said that our churches should have every possible assurance that the pastors occupying our pulpits and teaching our children are sound in doctrine. In authorizing the ordination of men not properly certified for the ministry, certain district presidents have knowingly and deliberately gone contrary to the rules which we have all agreed to abide by in our Synod and they have thus violated their own oath of office. Synod in convention at Anaheim properly considered this a most serious offense and reasserted the policies governing ordination. In view of the gravity of the matter, it even provided for the removal from office of those who continue their flagrant violations. However, already at Anaheim eight district presidents said to the convention and to Synod that they would continue to ordain uncertified men. Since the convention at least two of them have done so.

ONE legitimately asks how these men can possibly justify such wilful disobedience and rebellion. The defense offered by them is that they are acting in obedience to their conscience. But conscience, stained by man's sinfulness, can and does err. Conscience, we have seen, is unerring only when it renders a judgment on the basis of a clear Word of God. *Therefore, these men, in appealing to their conscience, are duty bound to show that Synod has acted contrary to the Word of God in establishing its rules regarding the certification and ordination of men to its ministry.* Only by showing Synod to be in violation of Scriptures can they justify their disobedience and the violation of their oath of office.

Several conclusions are in order: First, as one reads in context the repeated appeals to "conscience" it is obvious that at least some are blithe and unthinking distortions of the Scriptural principles regarding conscience. One is led to the conclusion that the nice-sounding word "conscience" is being used to assert the self-willed claims of the sinful flesh. Bluntly put: I do what I want to do and then try to justify my actions by saying that I must obey my conscience.

A SECOND conclusion: In those cases where the appeal to conscience apparently is sincerely made, the person in question must take certain actions. At the very outset, on the basis of the Word of God, he must show Synod what he considers to be the error of its sinful ways. Furthermore, if according to his conscience he considers Synod to be in error, he cannot remain in fellowship with those "errorists" who hold to the synodical position and he cannot attend Lord's Supper with them, for by so doing he clearly would be sinning against his conscience.

It finally comes to this that if, on the basis of conscience he considers Synod to be in error, he literally is conscience-bound to leave the Synod. For to sin against conscience is to endanger one's eternal salvation.

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Quincy, Illinois

Affirm

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Laymen and the Obligation to Judge Doctrine

IN a time of crisis in the church, it is imperative that we restudy basic issues. One of these is the place of the layman in the church, especially in relationship to the authority of the clergy. Pastors of congregations indeed have a divine call to preach and to teach; they are spokesmen for God. But they have at the same time a divine mandate to teach God's word and not adulterate it with human notions. If that should happen, what should the layman do?

Today this is a real problem. Apart from what one can read in books and church papers about the differences of opinion among Lutheran pastors on matters of doctrine, there have been surveys made, like that by Lawrence K. Kersten. (*The Lutheran Ethic. The Impact of Religion on Laymen and Clergy*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970). This survey shows how widely Lutherans differ on some key Bible doctrines. Kersten says that only 43 percent of the LCA clergy believe that only those who believe in Jesus can be saved. For the ALC clergy it is 52 percent, and for the Missouri Synod clergy only 84 percent. What does a lay member do if he has a pastor who holds out universalism as a valid option, namely that there is salvation outside of Christ, that adherents of other religions also can attain to eternal salvation?

ST. Paul already emphasized the Christian responsibility to test all teachings and teachers. "Prove all things, hold fast that Which is good." (I Timothy 5:21). To a congregation as immature and troubled as that in Corinth, the apostle wrote that they should judge what he wrote them. (I Corinthians 10:15). It is noteworthy that when St. Paul got to Berea, the Christians there tested what he preached by checking it against their Old Testament Scriptures. Thus, they made their written Scriptures the norm for the content of the apostle's sermon. This is certainly a sound and God pleasing model for Christians today, to check the preaching and teaching of the pastor against the Scriptures.

St. John exhorted his readers: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (I John 4:1).

Luther was challenged to show how this principle applied in specific situations in his disturbed age. When the Christians in the town of Leisnig desired to have a Lutheran pastor, but the abbot of the Cistercian monastery who was hostile to the Lutherans and who had the feudal right to appoint the pastor for the town tried to frustrate the congregation, Luther advised the congregation that a Christian congregation has not only the right, but the authority before God to judge the doctrine and teaching of prospective pastors, as also the right to appoint their own pastor and to dismiss him for just cause. This essay of Luther is found in volume 39 of the new American edition of his works (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970) and deserves reading by all church members today. Luther identifies the preaching of the pure Gospel as the central mark for the identification of a real Christian congregation. Secondly, he says a group of Christians thus identified should not permit themselves to be bound by the statutes of popes or emperors, princes or bishops who are ensconced in institutions which long ago have ceased to be Christian.

For the soul of man is something eternal, and more important than every temporal thing. That is why it must be ruled and seized only by the eternal word; for it is very disgraceful to rule consciences before God with human law and old custom. That is why this matter must be dealt with according to Scripture and God's word; for God's word and human teaching inevitably oppose each other when the latter tries to rule the soul. (*Luther's Works*, Vol. 39, 306).

Luther says that according to the human teachings of his time it was asserted that only bishops, scholars, and councils should

be allowed to judge doctrine, but Christ established the very opposite when He said that His sheep do not follow strangers, but flee from them, for they do not recognize as authoritative the voice of the stranger. (John 10:5). Therefore, says Luther, one can see clearly who has the right to judge doctrines.

Bishops, popes, scholars, and everyone else have the power to teach, but it is the sheep who are to judge whether they teach the voice of Christ or the voice of strangers. (p. 307).

AGAIN, Luther emphasized the words of Christ in Matthew 7, 15, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves." And, "Take heed that no one leads you astray." (Matthew 24:4).

In the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, this obligation of the congregation to judge doctrine was revived once the founding fathers had become disillusioned with an episcopal hierarchy. The very structure of the Missouri Synod, organized in 1847, reflected this. Contrary to the polity of earlier "synods," which were in the spirit of the times usually associations of clergy, the Missouri Synod was basically composed of congregations. In the councils of the Synod when it met in convention, laymen were assured an even voice with the clergy, even in the most serious and profound theological discussions. If laymen are involved at those levels, their function at the congregational level certainly cannot and should not frighten them.

On the basis of Matthew 7:15-23 C. F. W. Walther preached a very searching sermon in which he again spelled out the duty of the lay members to be on guard against false doctrine and false teachers. In his introduction he explained that God permitted false teachers partly to prove His children, and also to punish the unthankful hearers. Walther said:

God also often carries out his heaviest judgments through false teachers. God often bestows upon a land or a church true teachers for a time. But then it often happens that they are despised and received ungratefully. Earthly treasures are esteemed more highly than the pure Word and Sacrament. Men become ashamed before the world because of the pure doctrine. Nothing is done to maintain the orthodox ministry and God's Word is heard with a sleepy mind.¹

Then God shakes the church up by permitting false teachers to come into it. It is the duty of the laymen in the church, however, to be on guard then, and reorient the teaching ministry in their midst according to the Word of God.

WHAT this means in the present situation is that laymen should be on their guard against pastors who accept the new theology, who for example would like to hold out the possibility that not all the content of the Bible is reliable, that the Gospels are the result of the consensus of the post-apostolic church, that accounts of the miracles of Christ are therefore embellished with human fancy, that there are therefore other options on the doctrine of the virgin birth, the deity of Christ, or His resurrection. Congregations have not only the right but the duty to dismiss pastors who hold such false doctrines.

However, congregations must be careful not to use devious methods such as dismissing a pastor for budgetary reasons, rather than making it a clearcut issue of false doctrine. If a congregation is convinced it is correct, then it is less than honest to permit the issue of doctrine to become obscured under secondary issues.

Dr. Roy A. Suelflow, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri

¹ The sermon referred to was preached by Walther in 1842, and is found in his *Evangelienpostille*. It is translated by Nils C. Oesleby. In English mimeographed form it is available in the library of Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield.

On The News Front

THE first major test of Synod's (3-06) ELIM resolution came at Concordia College, St. Paul, Minn. ELIM, a liberal organization within our Synod, long ago was found by Synod's Board of Directors to be essentially a church within a church. Synod at Anaheim, after further in-depth evaluation, spelled out the divisive and schismatic manner in which ELIM functions and called on active ELIMites to make a choice between their membership in ELIM and their membership in Synod.

Following the convention and its clear-cut resolution, the Minnesota college's president, Dr. Harvey Stegemoeller, confronted the school's Board of Control with an outspoken defense of ELIM and his own unwillingness to take any action as far as the faculty was concerned. The Board responded with a kind but firm statement in which it simply restated Synod's decision and pointed out that all of us, including the school president, are honor-bound to abide by it. The president offered his resignation. The Board accepted it. These are the simple facts.

In the entire case several things are clear, including some striking parallels to the earlier Tietjen case at our St. Louis Seminary.

Did this school president, with several job offers in his pocket, literally ask to be fired in the hope of providing ELIM with the 'martyr' it desperately needs now as it is trying to put together enough pastors and congregations who are willing to leave the Missouri Synod and form a new and liberal church body this coming January or February?

Massive pressure, even from high places, were put on the Board of Control to retract its actions. First, unbelievable as it may sound, efforts were made to get the Board to rescind its statement in which it merely reasserted the stipulations of Synod's ELIM resolution! When that failed, pressure was exerted to get the Board, in a special meeting, to rescind its acceptance of the president's resignation.

Paralleling the abuse heaped on our St. Louis Board of Control in 1973 and 1974, were the vituperative letters, harassing phone calls, and unseemly meddling by some who are well-meaning but who ought to stay out of other people's business.

Stoutly holding on to both its moral and its intellectual integrity, the Board stood fast. There was no way for that Board to rescind its statement and thus say in effect that it was wrong in abiding by Synod's resolution. By the same token, for the Board to rescind its acceptance of the president's resignation would be saying that the president was right and Synod was wrong. By either action the Board itself would have been in rebellion against Synod.

The Old Adam is prideful. He would have us all think that we are indispensable. It is salutary to remember that we are not. We all come and go, but the Lord's work goes on and gets done. To be sure, a Board of Control does not like to lose its executive officer. But when the price is total capitulation and abdicating synodically assigned duties and directives, then the decision, though painful, is simple and clear.

* * *

CONCORDIA Teachers College, River Forest, inaugurated its 112th academic year on September 14th with an opening service. Its prexy, Dr. Paul Zimmerman, announced that the total undergraduate enrollment stood at 1,001. About 30 below last year's enrollment, this small shrinkage reflects the size of the last graduating class. This year's freshman class numbers 162; last year's was 152. Moreover, 162 new students with advanced rating were registered, seven more than last year. A sense of dedication and purpose pervades the student body and promises to make this an exciting year. By grace the school will continue to graduate teachers capable and willing to serve in the Lord's Kingdom! *Affirm* notes with gratitude the progress River Forest is making.

* * *

THE news coming out of our St. Louis Sem, which the dissidents once tried to bring to its knees, continues to be excellent. Its fall enrollment of 284 reflects a 47 percent increase over the fall enrollment last year. Some interesting facts about the enrollment include these: the largest increase is in the first-year class—98 students compared to 46 last year; 58 of these first-year students are from the Senior College at Fort Wayne; 16 senior students returned to Concordia after serving a year of vicarage under the auspices of Seminex. The evident blessings of God upon the Sem call for nationwide gratitude; in its darkest hours some years back few dared to hope that the Sem would make so rapid a recovery in so short a period of time.

(Continued on next page)

On The News Front: (Continued from Previous Page)

THE Commission on Theology and Church Relations calls attention to the fact that questions about procedure and the interpretation of Synod's Constitution and Bylaws seem to have taken precedence in the Synodical controversy and reminds Synod "that doctrinal disagreement is the fundamental problem facing our church body . . ." It also recognizes that some now seriously consider leaving Missouri and others actively encourage this. It recognizes the right of Christians to decide such matters and knows that some may feel compelled to decide to separate from Missouri to "maintain their personal integrity." But the CTCR "fervently hopes that such drastic action will take place, if it is to take place at all, only after every effort has been made to study the doctrinal issues. Division on the basis of anything less than doctrine is against the will of God and is to be avoided." The CTCR therefore "encourages all of the members of Synod to study thoroughly the Holy Scriptures and our Lutheran Confessions."

* * *

ON the positive side the CTCR in a September meeting pledged to give highest priority to carrying out Anaheim's Resolution 3-01 which directed the CTCR to coordinate the preparation of a series of Bible class studies and to provide for on-going theological education to promote doctrinal unity. *Affirm* applauds the action the CTCR has already taken and points out that this, more than any other single act, may help the Synod again pull itself together in a God-pleasing way.

* * *

THE Nebraska conservative publication reveals ELIM's strategy for taking over and controlling a congregation. Reprinted here almost in full, it is worth reading and pondering.

(The following strategy was presented at a state ELIM organizational meeting in 1974, and is taken from recorded notes of that meeting.)

This Is ELIM Talking

In the future it will become more and more important who controls the votes in a congregation and the votes of a congregation. To do this you must understand where the power is in a congregation. The power structure of a congregation is divided into four groups.

1. *The Pastor:* Whether we like to admit it or not, the pastor is the major decision maker in a congregation. We speak of the Priesthood of all Believers; but in the power structure the pastor is in the center. If he is a conservative, he can be neutralized by a liberal leaning church council. If he is already a liberal, he has already begun to surround himself with like-minded people in the Board of Directors.

2. *The Church Council or Board of Directors:* This group either makes the major decisions or decides what decisions will be made by a congregation, because it controls the agenda of a meeting.

This group should be penetrated as soon as possible, because if you have a conservative pastor, he can be led by the vocal feelings of the Board of Directors or even one vocal member of that group. Also, pastors do not stay forever, and it is this group who determines the theological stance of the new pastor. They also elect delegates to the District and Synodical Conventions.

To have a strong liberal church council, try to change the constitution to get rid of the Voter's Assembly form of government, and go to a *Board of Directors system*. This way fewer men control a congregation.

3. *The Buffer.* This group is often overlooked, but they protect the people and the decisions of the church council. It is usually made up of former Board members, wives and relatives, all well meaning, and will speak up in favor of all decisions made, so as not to rock the boat. This group is important, so keep their good will.

4. *The Voter's Assembly:* This is a most difficult group for ELIM, because they remember the old Missouri; they are the old liners and will remain loyal to Synod.

. . . (They) make a lot of noise, but cannot do much. They are really out of it if the constitution has been changed in the right places.

SUMMARY

Moderates should work hard to change groups 1, 2 and 3, to the ELIM way of thinking. It may take some time, but it will be worth it.

(Continued on Next Page)

On The News Front: (Continued from previous page)

THE survey made by a faculty member of Concordia Senior College and reported to the ELIM meeting some weeks ago confirms, on a large scale, some of the facts which have been repeatedly asserted in various ways by those with tendencies toward a liberal stance.

Unfortunately, on the key issue of doctrine the survey, together with the action of the ELIM assembly, do not clearly indicate what the people who belong to this group want. The survey showed that 61 percent of those who responded (and the surveyors indicate that because of mailing problems the sample they had to work with is not truly random) favored developing a confessional statement which clearly establishes ELIM's doctrinal and theological position.

Despite this, the assembly voted to "continue to affirm that trusting only in the free grace of God in Jesus Christ, we root our confessing in the Holy Scriptures as the only rule and norm of life and in the Lutheran Symbols as a totally adequate confession, and that an adoption of a more formal statement is not needed."

This may be as far as ELIM will ever go on this matter. Small group and private discussions indicate that the members of ELIM hold a wide range of belief on a key issue like the inspiration of the Word, and it seems likely that no single document could cover the whole spread of those beliefs.

The same kind of latitude can be seen in the responses which two key issues of our day draw. Half of those responding said ELIM should be "sympathetic" to homosexuality. It seems difficult to determine what "sympathetic" means in a setting like this. Perhaps the term meant "understanding and forgiving" to many; perhaps it meant something else. But whatever the precise meaning, the response to the homosexual issue would indicate a more permissive attitude in ELIM than that common in Missouri and found in the Bible.

The same is true of legalized abortion. More than 44 percent of the respondents were favorable or sympathetic to legalized abortion. Again, this indicates a permissiveness which goes beyond the limits God's Word has set in these matters.

Another question about a matter on which Missouri has stood firmly, as all Christendom did since its inception, that of women's ordination, showed almost 70 percent of those connected with ELIM felt a sympathetic understanding to it or favored it.

The charismatic movement drew a response which indicated that two-thirds favored it or were sympathetic to it.

What do all these findings and what do the August actions of ELIM mean?

They would seem to mean first that the ELIM range of theological opinion is far greater than has ever been tolerated in Missouri and the Word, that ELIM knows this, and that ELIM is prepared to act on it in the near future.

They also seem to mean that ELIM is slowly moving toward a more permissive moral stand than the Word of God allows.

Finally, they seem to mean that ELIM is moving toward a break with Missouri.

The tragedy of this is beyond calculation.

But ELIM is serious enough about its stand to vote a budget of 1.8 million dollars for the coming year.

The general trend in ELIM apparently is to consider the Anaheim resolutions too restrictive for its members.

What will happen no one can foresee.

How much hope is there of avoiding the looming split? No one knows, but by the grace of God some hope still remains.

We should pray that this hope will bear fruit—and work toward it as much as lies within our power for every outward fragmentation of the Kingdom, on bases like these, is regrettable.

(Continued on next page)

Editorial Policy

While the articles in *Affirm* with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

Contributions

With their generous support many of its friends have made the publication of *Affirm* possible.

You also can help defray its cost by contributing in any amount to:

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On The News Front: (Continued from previous page)

CONTRARY to the Anaheim Resolution, according to the *Northern Light*, Mount Olive Lutheran in Minneapolis ordained a Seminex grad on August 24th. President Hecht performed the ceremony. Dr. Alton Wedel, pastor of Mount Olive, told the congregation that the new clergyman would need "boldness and courage" to take the "demonic tyranny that has taken hold of the church and threatens to destroy the Gospel." The district paper comments, "But since when is it 'demonic tyranny' to expect professed men of God to live up to their ordination and installation vows? And just how does it 'destroy the Gospel' to insist that the Bible is the verbally inspired, inerrant Word of God? This is another example of the strange logic of ELIM and its supporters."

* * *

THE *Colorado Newsletter* carries an item about an ELIM rally in Denver on September 7th at which Pastor Samuel Roth, ELIM's president, and Dr. Paul Bretscher were present. "Dr. Paul Bretscher plainly said what informed conservatives have long known to be part of the 'moderate' theology, that believing the Bible to be the Word of God supposedly belongs to a bygone era. At adjournment time one ELIM supporter objected that the guest speakers had done ELIM more harm than good and moved to extend the time. During the 15-minute extension the aberration, and customary coverup, became even more apparent."

* * *

ALL laymen and clergy should note that ELIM has apparently embarked on a nationwide effort to change congregational constitutions with respect to the item of church property. In the past, parish property, in case of a division within the church, belonged to those who continued to hold Missouri's traditional doctrinal position. This might be as few as the members of a single family. ELIM's concerted effort is to modify church constitutions so that, in the event of a division for any reason, the property would belong to the majority. In one test case in Lakewood, Colorado, such a move was defeated in a voters' meeting attended by some 170 voters.

Affirm predicts that as the contest now moves to the grassroots, many more such attempts will be made and urges all conservatives to be alert to the slightest move toward such a constitutional change.

Affirm's Mailing List

If you have friends to whom you want *Affirm* sent, please inform us. We will be happy to place them on our mailing list.

To comply with postal mailing regulations *AFFIRM'S* mailing list is arranged numerically according to Zip Code Number.

Therefore, it would be helpful to us if names were ARRANGED NUMERICALLY ACCORDING TO ZIP CODE NUMBERS, AND ALPHABETICALLY UNDER EACH ZIP CODE. This will enable us to check easily to determine if the names submitted are already on our mailing list, and eliminate duplicate mailings.

It would also be helpful if names and addresses were printed clearly or typewritten.

PREUS (Continued from page 1)

IT seems evident that, just as the conservatives, so the men with liberal inclinations do not understand what middle ground Preus thinks he is on.

The truth is, once more, no genuine middle is possible. Love is possible; further efforts to heal the breach are possible. But they cannot be carried out in good conscience from a theological middle ground.

This column pleads with Missouri's president to define what he means by the "middle" toward which he moves.

Or if he cannot define it in suitable theological terms, to abandon whatever position he seems to have taken and to serve again as the able leader he has been by grace the last six years.

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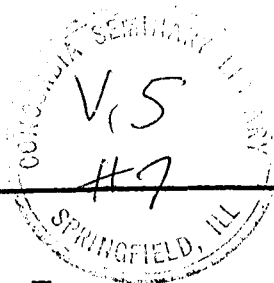


"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"

2 Cor. 4:13

RECEIVED

NOV 17 1975



Discipline With Love

"THE Lord loveth whom he chasteneth," the writer of Hebrews reassures us.

Love and discipline, therefore, are not incompatible in Christendom; in fact, not to discipline a person who needs discipline may well evidence a failure of love.

The permissiveness of our age has created staggering problems of delinquency, crime, addiction, vandalism, terrorism, and random attacks on people.

The average man in the pew knows this, often is bewildered by it, and struggles to cope as best he can. He may be all the more bewildered by the fact that his church, Missouri, has for a decade or more shown a permissiveness in church affairs which does not befit the Word and the Confessions he was taught to accept and adds to the chaos of our age.

Since Anaheim, his confusion may have grown—and in some instances evidently has. His church laid down, firmly, at New Orleans the theological basics with which to end its inner turmoil. Two years later, at Anaheim, it passed a series of practical resolutions to end the permissiveness and disorder in its own midst, prescribed courses of action, in keeping with God's will, to make Missouri once more a truly unified and confessional church.

That was in July's first days.

By the time you read this almost five months will have elapsed with hardly a ripple of action to carry out the disciplinary procedures there decided on.

OF course, the church moves slowly and circumspectly.

Of course, some time must elapse in order to prepare the steps which are to be taken.

Of course, the Tietjen affair has just been appealed—and what will happen to it remains to be seen.

Of course, the eight deviant district presidents have been put on notice in a recent letter, and Missouri's President, on a month's trip to other parts of the world, left the matter of starting the process of dealing with one of these eight to his First Vice President.

But in a quarter of the biennium to the next election, on the national scene, little more has surfaced, as far as anyone can determine, to indicate that the strong resolutions of Anaheim will be carried out, though other preparations may be in process.

OUR national church will in short order be ridiculed if it continues to make weighty and Biblically sound pronouncements on current affairs without acting on them.

If our national leadership has other plans than what it has so far revealed, no one else apparently knows about it. And

its inaction further confuses and weakens church members everywhere.

Its inaction would seem a sign that what we profess and what we really believe are two different matters.

Meanwhile, around the districts and at the grassroots level, there seems to be a deeper understanding of the need for consistency between word and deed.

Congregations here and there have separated themselves from pastors who follow the ELIM line. Moreover, congregations have experienced tragic but necessary splits over theological matters.

Here and there districts have parted ways with officials who found themselves so wedded to ELIM that, forced to make a choice, they chose ELIM.

Conservatives have sought legal advice on the grassroots level to prepare themselves against what seem to be the inevitable conflicts which may arise in the midst of some of them.

All that ought to encourage our national leadership and strengthen its hand. Perhaps it will.

PERHAPS too there have been grassroot and district failures to act. Each of the eight district presidents should be challenged at the district level. The ELIM leadership, against which the Anaheim resolution spoke forthrightly, can also be challenged.

It appears to be true that the effort to discipline Missouri must occur at all levels at the same time and with the same force. It appears true that this concerted action, taken as lovingly and evangelically as possible (but firmly) will be the only solution to Missouri's problems.

The President of Missouri needs help and strengthening; so do the districts in which the trouble continues, and so do congregations. If they do not act mutually they weaken the case of all.

A great church tragedy is happening—one which no conservative loving his Lord, wanted to happen.

How does one conduct oneself in such times?

With prudence, it is true, but most of all with the wisdom and knowledge gained from God's Word and with integrity and courage.

Without them, the cause can be lost.

It still is true that, whatever measure of liberalism infects her clergy, most of Missouri, perhaps as much as 90 percent of it, does not want to follow the liberal path.

That means action, loving, patient, sorrowful, but firm action against those who would tear Missouri apart.

It means action—now!

An Evaluation of the Address of the ALC At Anaheim

OF the three executives who addressed the delegates of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod at Anaheim, only one was in altar and pulpit fellowship with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). Since the Denver Convention of 1969 altar and pulpit fellowship were made possible for those congregations who had no qualms of conscience with exercising such fellowship, a fellowship which, however, many congregations on a local level refused to recognize because of challenging the validity of the grounds on the basis of which altar and pulpit fellowship were adopted. Dr. David Preus, a cousin of Dr. J. A. O. Preus, spoke on behalf of the American Lutheran Church and set forth the program of the Lutheran church which he leads at this time.

The president of the ALC shared with the delegates the program of his denomination for the coming years. Among other statements made by him was the following:

The Lutheran emphasis on God's grace needs to be heard, and it needs to be seen as applied in our lives. This is the day for outspoken, aggressive, congregational oriented, catechetically sound Lutheran Christian evangelism. Our ALC Church Council just two weeks ago declared our primary ALC emphasis for the days ahead will be "evangelical outreach." That is where we are headed.

To this objective the members of the LCMS joyfully say: Amen. The LCMS appreciates this primary emphasis on the evangelical outreach.

However, the ALC's president also stated that the ALC plans on "helping create a just human society where half of the people do not have to go to bed hungry tonight and where half of the people do not live in tyranny." Another goal of the ALC was as follows:

Build, strengthen, encourage, love—these are Biblical charges to put ourselves together. Yet we are flying apart in a frightening way. Families, congregations, communities, church bodies and nations become critical, cantankerous, fault finding, angry, and divisive. Who rallies the families to new loyalty and life if not the churches? Who will stay and battle for community health when it is easier to run away to new places of privilege if not the people of God?

Regarding some of these goals, questions must be raised as to whether or not some of these are the real business of the church! There appears to be a mixing of the two kingdoms which Luther claimed should be kept separate. How are people to be freed from a tyranny? Is the church to support revolution? Is the church to use its resources to have what it believes to be the right position forced on people by legislation? Does the (any) Lutheran church have such large sums of money and time at its disposal as to effectively evangelize the world and also at the same time create a so-called just society? Should the church use force to have these worthwhile goals realized? Should it support socialism and Marxism?

Furthermore, the ALC president informed Anaheim that his church body is committed to Lutheran cooperation. He stated that "the ALC believes in the Lutheran Council of the U.S.A. (LCUSA) and its potential for vital joint ministry . . . We intend to expand the areas of Lutheran cooperation. That is where we are headed. We ask you to join us." The ALC is also in favor of participation and cooperation with the Lutheran World Federation. That is the direction the ALC is headed.

The importance and necessity of having agreement in doctrine and practice is no longer mentioned. The present ALC's doctrinal practice is a far cry from what its doctrinal stance was in 1938 when the common confession was written and adopted. The Lutheran World Federation has in its membership churches which are not even Lutheran. In 1963 the Lutheran World Federation could not agree on the basic doctrine of Lutheranism, namely, the doctrine of justification by faith. Actions at recent conclaves of the Lutheran World Federation reveal that this federation of so-called Lutheran churches has departed from the orthodox Lutheranism as set forth in the Lutheran Confessions. If that is where the ALC is heading, then it is time for the LCMS to part company.

But while the ALC claims it is devoted to the Lutheran heritage, Dr. Preus asserted that this Lutheran devotion will not be used as a defense mechanism to fend off other Christians but as a genuine contribution to catholic Christianity. Does this mean that there will be altar and pulpit fellowship with non-Lutheran groups whose theological positions are rejected as false doctrine in the Lutheran Confessions? The Lutheran Confessions reject the erroneous teachings of the Reformed and Roman Catholics on a number of important doctrines. If that which is distinctly Lutheran need not be defended and fought for, then why not simply advocate the formation of community Christian churches, where the members can believe what they wish and where one may substitute A SOCIAL GOSPEL and a watered-down theology, if any kind of theology at all needs to be preached?

IN his so-called "final word" Dr. David Preus alluded to the theological discussions with the LCMS. He declared: "There are a few presuppositions with which we operate. We want to be clear with you so that our discussions may be fruitful." We appreciate the frankness of the ALC's leader. According to Preus the ALC has a deep and rich evangelical heritage; that it has such a heritage no one can doubt. But what is it doing with this doctrinal heritage of the last four hundred years? The ALC president further claims:

We believe ourselves as theologically blessed and capable as any other American Lutheran Church. As a result we expect to contribute theologically to you just as we expect you to contribute to us. We expect you to listen and learn from us just as we expect to listen and learn from you. We do not believe God has uniquely cast any one church body in a teaching role. We think it is essential that we be teachers and learners together.

That one church denomination does not know everything and can learn from another Lutheran church is normally true. But Dr. Preus did not tell the convention delegates that the theologians of repute in his church are employing a new methodology in the interpretation of Scripture. The professors and leaders of the ALC are employing the Historical-Critical Method and have rejected the Historical-Grammatical Method once used in the synods that now comprise the ALC. The seminaries of the ALC at Luther, in St. Paul, Wartburg, in Iowa and the Lutheran School of Theology at Columbus have a new generation of professors who have been taught, believe and promote a methodology that employs interpretative techniques, that question the historicity of much in the Old Testament, that holds that the Word of God contains errors and mistakes, that rules out predictive prophecy in both the Old and New

(Continued on page 3)

ELIM, Quo Vadis?

IT is very shocking and extremely distressing for loyal members of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to learn that at its last Assembly in the Chicago area on August 13-15, 1975, ELIM (Evangelical Lutherans in Mission) passed a resolution which causes us to ask, "ELIM, Quo Vadis?" ELIM, Where Are You Going?

ELIM Resolution 75-5 states in its first two resolutions:

1. To encourage study, consultation, worship and mission activities which intensify and celebrate Lutheran unity.
2. To recognize and celebrate complete pulpit and altar fellowship with all Lutherans.

Missouri in Perspective in its September 1, 1975, issue reports that "complete altar and pulpit fellowship with all Lutherans was given unanimous recognition by the ELIM Assembly."

On the basis of this resolution ELIM has clearly indicated that it does not want to walk together with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. ELIM, Quo Vadis?

While the Denver Convention in 1969 declared we are in pulpit and altar fellowship with the American Lutheran Church, we are not in such fellowship with the Lutheran Church in America. A floor committee had prepared a resolution for the Anaheim Convention which, if it had been adopted, would have continued and expanded conversations with the LCA (Resolution 3-19). Because of a lack of time this resolution did not receive any action.

It is saddening to know that ELIM by its action has affirmed its intention to go the opposite way the Missouri Synod is going. The passage of its fellowship resolution is one of the most tragic and unfortunate events in the 128 year history of Missouri. ELIM has chosen not to wait for Missouri to declare pulpit and altar fellowship with all Lutherans after agreement in doctrine has been attained. Even though there are serious doctrinal differences between the LCA and our Synod, ELIM has chosen to disregard these differences. ELIM, Quo Vadis?

MANY leaders in ELIM have stoutly maintained that they are not bound by the Bylaws of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. On the other hand they have firmly maintained their faithful adherence to and compliance with the Constitution of our Synod. However, by adopting Resolution 75-5 ELIM has repudiated the Constitution of our Synod! Article VI of the Constitution affirms the *Conditions of Membership*. The article rejects unionism of every description, such as "taking part in the services and sacramental rites of heterodox congregations or of congregations of mixed confession." The Constitution of the Missouri Synod rejects unionism. ELIM has espoused unionism by adopting a resolution which declares it is in complete pulpit and altar fellowship with all Lutherans.

ELIM Resolution 75-5 also raises some very important questions about the future of the Lutheran Council in the USA (LCUSA). *Missouri in Perspective* has reported that the "LCM (Lutheran Church in Mission) has since stated that some form of new Lutheran organization will be functional after February, 1976." (September 29, 1975) If LCUSA accepts the Lutheran Church in Mission, a church which has the blessings of ELIM, will Missouri be able to function in the Council? Will the Council itself be able to function as a Lutheran Council?

We sadly ask you the question, ELIM, Quo Vadis? We are deeply troubled that you have unilaterally resolved not to walk with us.

The Rev. Andrew Simcak, Jr., Pastor
St. Timothy Lutheran Church
Houston, Texas

An Appeal

As the articles and news of this and recent issues of *Affirm* make amply clear, the struggle in Missouri now reaches its climax.

The time between now and its Dallas convention, in 1977, will prove enormously important to Christ's men who call themselves "conservative" to identify as fully as they can with the teachings of the Word, with His grace, and with all Missouri has stood for in its long and blessed history.

Because of its growing readership (*Affirm* now reaches 100,000 people) and the spiraling inflation we all suffer, and because of the importance of "holding fast" in this crucial time, *Affirm* asks you, in the name of our Savior and for the cause of His Kingdom, to use the envelope in this issue to make a special Christmas offering for its support. It is fully tax-deductible.

We have come much of the way in Missouri—under the guidance of God—and we have much to be thankful for. In every phase of our national church life, our common work is in the hands of men who make the kind of God-pleasing decisions which long marked Missouri's history.

Our Sems are again prospering under our control. Our mission policy and our educational policies are being determined by men who think first and only of the good of the Kingdom. Our church staffs, by and large, are again composed of people loyal to the Father and Christ and Spirit Missouri has always worshipped.

Let your offering this Christmas be a thank offering for these many blessings as well as an offering dedicated to helping the struggle, won at the center of church life, not be lost at the grassroots level!

Affirm pledges to keep faith with our Lord, to keep you informed on ways of meeting our common problems, and to keep by grace a spirit of love and joy and peace—the spirit of the Christ Child—alive in the church!

God give you and us the power of that Child of Bethlehem!

ALC (Continued from page 2)

Testaments, that questions many of the sayings and deeds of Jesus, that claims many teachings of Paul are no longer binding today. The ALC is ordaining women into the ministry, a clear violation of God's Word as given by Paul in I Corinthians and in I Timothy.

Incontrovertible evidence shows that faculties in the ALC are not only sympathetic to the theological positions of ELIM but have also in various ways defended and supported SEMINEX. The actions of many in the ALC have been speaking loudly, showing that they disagree with the historical position of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Furthermore the fact that the ALC is willing to recognize the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), of which the LCMS is convinced that its theological stance and church practice are not consonant with the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions and therefore LCMS never established altar and pulpit fellowship with the LCA, presents the strange situation that the ALC will recognize any church that claims to be Lutheran in name, irrespective of what it teaches and practices. At New Orleans and Anaheim, overtures were, therefore, presented calling for repudiation of the synodical action at Denver, 1969.

Dr. Raymond F. Surburg
Concordia Seminary
Springfield, Illinois

Congregational Autonomy: A Fifth Amendment?

THE term "congregational autonomy" as it relates to Article VII of the synodical constitution has received much attention in recent years. Does Article VII state that no synodical resolution of any kind, type or concern is binding upon the members of the Synod? Does the article state that the members of the Synod have total and complete freedom in responding to convention resolutions? Was it the intent of the founding fathers that the members of the Synod could "take or leave" resolutions solemnly adopted at conventions?

The present wording, which has created confusion and misunderstanding, did not become effective until 1920, when the original constitution was translated into English for the first time and when other major constitutional revisions were made. Since 1920, Article VII contains the following wording:

In its relation to its members the Synod is not an ecclesiastical government exercising legislative or coercive powers, and with respect to the individual congregation's right of self-government, it is but an advisory body. Accordingly, no resolution of the Synod imposing anything upon the individual congregation is of binding force if it is not in accordance with the Word of God, or if it appears to be inexpedient as far as the condition of a congregation is concerned.

What Does the Wording Mean?

SELF-GOVERNMENT. In order to understand the present article, it is essential to view it in its historic intent and content. The founding fathers were determined to safeguard the "self-government" of the local congregation. An examination of convention resolutions indicates that congregations consistently exercise their right of "self-government" in such matters as the following: A. calling pastors, teachers, and parish workers after they have been accredited by the Synod itself; B. owning congregational property and vesting it not in the Synod, but in the local congregation (this was innovative and new when the Synod was founded, particularly in contrast to the practices of some other Lutheran synods); C. disciplining a member of a parish (both the Synod and the Districts were effectively prohibited from interfering in such cases except through appeal); D. conducting congregational affairs with respect to programming and financing.

However, the same constitution (1920 version) makes it unmistakably clear that the congregations which had created the Synod and had voluntarily joined it, also pledged themselves to one another and to the Synod in a three-fold manner:

1. In a common, identified theological and confessional basis through Article II;
2. In their cooperative efforts to achieve their common objectives as identified in Article III;
3. In voluntarily complying with all of the conditions of membership as required in Article VI.

WHAT did the "fathers" mean? Was it their intention that no resolution was binding upon the parishes (and on its professional workers) unless the individual parish had adopted such a resolution? If this is correct, could we not expect to find reports from the parishes to this effect? No mention is made of any such action reported to any convention! In fact, it is highly doubtful whether congregations took time to vote on any of the convention resolutions except on rare occasions, although many thoroughly discussed such resolutions in their voters' assemblies.

Emphatically, self-government did not mean that the congregation had the right to ignore synodical resolutions. The history of the Synod and of its conventions simply does not allow for that. Such an interpretation would nullify the very purpose for which the Synod was established, namely, to do jointly what individual congregations could not do alone. The choice of whether or not to participate in such programs was not left to the individual parish after it had joined the Synod. On the other hand, matters which dealt with "self-government" were different. Here the Synod could only advise. [For a review of the specific duties laid upon the local congregation in "internal matters," note the formidable list by Walther in his *The Proper Form of an Evangelical Lutheran Congregation Independent of the State*. See especially paragraphs 6-66 in *Walther in the Church* (St. Louis, Concordia Publishing House, 1938, pp. 91-115)].

Ever since its adoption in 1920, the terminology of Article VII has stirred up questions of interpretation during the 50 years that it has been in existence, while the original paragraph which was in force for 70 years did not. One incident appears in the record pertinent to the original Article VII. It occurred in 1860, when the convention resolved to amalgamate the Ft. Wayne and St. Louis seminaries. A delegate raised the question whether the action could be taken without ratification by member congregations. The convention replied that it certainly had the authority to pass this resolution, since it had no bearing on the autonomy of the local congregation, nor did it affect its right of self-government. To satisfy the questioner, however, the congregations were urged to register their reactions to the vice-president by mail. The subsequent convention did not even bother to report the outcome. The action taken in 1860 was consistent with the basic policy established.

ADVISORY on doctrine? Was it the intent of the fathers that the Synod be "advisory" with reference to theological and confessional issues? According to the "compact" of Article II, the question must be answered with a loud "no." Two special test cases can be cited. The first came in 1857 when the convention adopted a statement on chiliasm, and the second in 1881 when it adopted the "Thirteen Theses" on predestination. Both resolutions adopted theological-confessional statements intended to resolve internal theological controversy; therefore, they constitute good precedents in asking whether the Synod, under the stress of theological controversy, had the authority and the prerogative to proclaim its position through resolutions. Although neither of these two statements were adopted unanimously, they were not challenged. Nor did anyone accuse the Synod of having amended its confessional platform as enunciated in Article II. Nor did anyone appeal to Article VII, countering that the Synod was merely advisory and hence the congregations were free to agree or disagree with these formulations. Also totally absent is an appeal to Article VIII C.

In spite of the existence of Article VII, the 1881 convention responded to the question of the applicability of the "Thirteen Theses." The convention consensus records:

We are assembled here by the authority of all our congregations. Every one of our congregations is decidedly represented here (in spite of the delegate system established in 1872) and this includes also each one's confessional position. No one has the right to insist on the contrary unless he can produce uncontroverted facts in his favor. No individual members of the Synod for their per-

(Continued on page 7)

On the News Front

SEVERAL months ago Frank Starr quietly and without fanfare took over the executive editorship of the *Lutheran Witness*. As he assumed this important and difficult position it was the hope and prayer of thousands in Synod that under his leadership the *Witness* would become in fact what is in name, to wit, the house organ of our Synod. Within the bounds of accuracy and fairness, the official publication of any corporation is properly expected to be candidly and unabashedly in favor of its sponsor.

The *Lutheran Witness* is the Missouri Synod's paper. It should be pro-Missouri. Especially in these days of doctrinal controversy it should present clearly and supportively the doctrinal and administrative positions of our church body. Deviations therefrom should be labeled as such and clearly spelled out. Large numbers in our Synod are still uninformed about the basic elements of the doctrinal errors and administrative rebellion rocking Missouri's boat. The *Lutheran Witness* can do much to fill that informational void.

Several of Editor Starr's recent editorials are a first-rate start toward that laudable goal. For example, *A Clear Choice* (LW, Sept. 14) leaves no doubt that ELIM, the schismatic liberal organization within Synod, intends to walk its own way no matter what Synod may desire or do and, therefore, there is now a clear choice to be made by all of us between membership in Synod and membership in ELIM.

Our belated congratulations to Editor Frank Starr on his appointment. May God give him strength, courage, and wisdom to continue sounding a clear editorial trumpet!

* * *

EUGENE Fincke, a member of the St. Louis Sem's Board of Control and a layman of the small Southern Illinois District, recently told a gathering of the members of his district,

We could talk about stewardship and how we could get the most from the widow's mite. This could include a discussion of this year's budget of the Southern Illinois District and the allocation of some of its operating expenses. For instance, the budget includes \$7,300 for automobile operation for the district president and his administrative assistant, plus an additional \$2,400 for car replacement or a total of \$9,700 for the operation of 2 cars for a year. By using the regulations permitted under the U.S. Internal Revenue Service Code for car allowance, which also includes car replacement, these 2 men will travel by car this year, the equivalent of circling the world 3¼ times, just to cover the Southern Illinois District.

Missouri does indeed have financial problems; no doubt, some of them arise because the expenses within districts are out of line.

* * *

IN his latest *Brothers and Sisters* letter, written just before his month-long trip out of the country, the President of Missouri complained of the difficulty of communicating which seems to afflict all of us in our time. He explained that he was not "moving to the middle" in doctrinal matters, but that what he should have said was that "in dealing with another we need to be of a more conciliatory spirit . . . And I would plead with all to join me in striving for a more kind and brotherly discussion of the important issues that confront us." Though more "kind and brotherly discussion" seems an odd way of explaining his "move to the middle," *Affirm* takes Preus at his word. His action or inaction during the next months will tell the story of what he meant in his August letter. *Affirm* hopes God will give him the grace to write an extraordinary history of faithfulness and courage and firmness in church history!

* * *

AFFIRM again applauds the many conservative publications around the country. They are not only prime evidence that many people have grown concerned about synodical matters, but that they deal with local deviations firmly, that they hold rallies to support Missouri's position, that they understand the issues Missouri faces. The struggle has reached the grassroots, where *Affirm* has long predicted the issue will be settled. God bless richly all who so vigorously support The Faith!

(Continued on page 6)

On the News Front: (Continued from page 5)

WORDS have a way of coming back to remind people of the past. Someone was good enough recently to send *AFFIRM, Some Remarks to the Members of the Faculty of Concordia Seminary, Springfield, Illinois, made on September 16, 1964*, by our past president, Dr. Oliver Harms.

He there said, among other things:

Personally I hope that all of us can continue to give our wholehearted support to the position on the Scriptures which the Synod has accepted, adopted, affirmed and reaffirmed. This position is expressed in these words:

"We teach that the Holy Scriptures differ from all other books in the world in that they are the Word of God. They are the Word of God because the holy men of God who wrote the Scriptures wrote only that which the Holy Ghost communicated to them by inspiration. We teach also that the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures is not a so-called 'theological deduction,' but that it is taught by direct statements of the Scriptures. Since the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God, it goes without saying that they are in all their parts and words the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters.

"We furthermore teach regarding the Holy Scriptures that they are given by God to the Christian Church for the foundation of faith. Hence the Holy Scriptures are the sole source from which all doctrines proclaimed in the Christian Church must be taken and therefore, too, the sole rule and norm by which all teachers and doctrines must be examined and judged. With the Confessions of our church we teach also that the 'rule of faith' (analogia fidei) according to which the Holy Scriptures are to be understood are the clear passages of the Scriptures themselves which set forth the individual doctrines.

"We reject the doctrine which under the name of science has gained wide popularity in the Church of our day that Holy Scripture is not in all its parts the Word of God, but in part the Word of God and in part the word of man and hence does, or at least might contain error. We reject this erroneous doctrine as horrible and blasphemous, since it flatly contradicts Christ and His holy apostles, sets up men as judges over the Word of God, and thus overthrows the foundation of the Christian Church and its faith." . . .

You may surmise that I am making a definite reference to the problem which deals with the scientific approach to the creation of the world and of all creatures. It seems to me that on this issue the *Brief Statement* speaks clearly and broadly enough, so that we may boldly use the words of this Statement. . . .

At the same time, I must remind all of us of the fact that there are areas in the Synod where men are still quite uneasy. It is for this reason that I plead with you, as I shall plead with all faculties of our terminal schools, that you speak with great care when answering doctrinal questions. Keep in mind that we can take little for granted even with students who are quite advanced. I plead again that you check statements against Scripture, against the Confessions, and against our synodical pronouncements. I also plead for a careful adherence to the plan adopted by the Saint Louis Seminary Faculty and the Synodical President's Office some years ago, at a time when I was only remotely connected with this office. This plan asks that we secure faculty and administration sanction before anything new or different is said by way of a public doctrinal pronouncement. This I would hope includes the classroom as being a public place. . . .

As our administration and our faculties move together, so the missionary enterprise will move. We have examples all around to show that missionary outreach is closely tied to the doctrinal conviction and to the unity of faith and spirit which prevail.

* * *

THE *Lutheran Forum* of September states, "But the facts must be faced. ELIM is on the move out of the LCMS. It may take a long time, but the forces unleashed by the August assembly are bound to carry thousands of people out of Missouri. Unless substantial concessions are made by the conservative administration very quickly, the LCMS will become one of the few bodies to have experienced major schism in modern times."

(Continued on page 8)

AUTONOMY (Continued from page 4)

sons have rendered a confession, but the Synod *itself* has rendered its confession. If later on it should appear that the confession of this or that delegate in this or that matter is not the confession of this or that parish which he represented, this still does not alter the circumstances in the least that here the Missouri Synod as such was assembled and rendered a confession. All the congregations of our synodical fellowship knew what the doctrine of Synod on predestination was. If our congregations did not acknowledge this, then, through their properly constituted boards, they would have expelled those, who, according to their convictions, had publicly been defending false doctrine. Our congregations will neither tolerate nor retain false teachers in their institutions. Instead of demanding that our teachers remain silent, our congregations have rather encouraged them to speak openly before the world (Missouri Synod *Proceedings*, 1881, p. 43).

Ever since the present wording of Article VII became official in 1920, repeated questions have been raised on the meaning and intent of the article. As a result, Bylaw 1.09b was adopted in 1944. It states:

The Synod expects every member congregation to respect its resolutions and to consider them of binding force if they are in accordance with the Word of God and if they appear expedient as far as the condition of the congregation is concerned. The Synod, being an advisory body, recognizes the right of a congregation to be the judge of the expediency of the resolutions as applied to its local condition. However, in exercising such judgment, a congregation must not act arbitrarily but in accordance with the principles of Christian love and charity.

But even that explanation has not relieved the continuing questions of interpretation.

It is in the spirit of a better understanding of this crucial article that this brief study is presented, with the hope that there will be a more harmonious "walking together" and a renewed pledge to carry out the objectives of the Synod to the greater glory and praise of the Lord of the Church.

Dr. August R. Suelflow
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Affirm

Affirm, sponsored by Balance Inc., is published monthly or more frequently by a group of its members concerned about theological and related developments in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

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Help for Students

MOST of us are painfully aware of the financial crunch which is a hall-mark of our day. We have problems with our family budgets. Pay raises never quite seem to catch up with inflation. However, economists may explain it, God says there is some theology in inflation. The prophet Haggai writes, "Thus says the Lord of hosts . . . he who earns wages earns wages to put them into a bag with holes." Inflation was God's judgment on Israel because of its indifference to Him. Is God similarly saying something to us?

Inflation has also hit the church and the gifts of God's people are not meeting the synodical dollar needs. Which means that Synod's Board of Directors must cut its allocation for higher education, and the Board for Higher Education sadly informs our 16 schools regarding a drastic cut in synodical support available for our colleges and seminaries.

At this point we are speaking primarily in support of our two seminaries, Springfield and St. Louis. The majority of students at both schools are married and have families. The students take part-time jobs, but there is a limit to that before studies suffer. The wives take whatever work they can find. At both seminaries the administration simply does not have the heart to add any sizeable increases to student costs and fees.

TWO practical suggestions are offered for your consideration. Many, perhaps most, congregations that have young men preparing for the ministry provide some sort of scholarship assistance. These programs should be reviewed and the support brought into harmony with today's higher educational costs. Congregations that help put young men into parishes and mission fields are engaged in a very real form of mission work.

Congregations that have no sons of their own at our seminaries may well consider "adopting" a student family. In today's inflated parish budget, \$25 or \$50 per month for a student or two constitutes a minor item. "Adoption" of a student might also be done by an organization within the parish. A ladies' aid, men's club, women's guild, or couples club which becomes personally involved with a seminary family will be rewarded with a feeling of warmth far above their investment. A letter addressed to the student aid department at either seminary will give you the name of a student family having a rough time of it.

ONE more thing. What about each of us, personally, as we are now reading this? In the affairs of men there come moments when we feel stirred to some good and noble deed. The door of opportunity opens quietly, but only momentarily. We either respond at once or somehow the mood recedes and God's open door closes as quietly and quickly as it opened. The Bible word for this is, "Quench not the Spirit!"

Has your heart been moved by the needs at our two schools of the prophets which, under God, determine the future of our pulpits, our parishes, and our church? A \$5 check from each of us on AFFIRM's mailing list to either school will meet the present pressure. Over the long haul, Synod itself should provide the majority of the cost of running the seminaries, for only thus will Synod continue to maintain control. However, the temporary and immediate needs are serious. The seminary administrators should devote their energies to quality education for our future pastors, not to worrying about the school budget. We can help them maintain that priority.

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Quincy, Illinois

On the News Front: (Continued from page 6)

BACK in 1966 at our St. Paul Concordia, its President William A. Poehler struggled with the question of the "public teaching" of Concordia's instructors there. A few paragraphs from a statement he then made will show what Missouri has always held concerning the doctrines taught at its schools,

The Publica Doctrina (Public Teaching) of Synod must be presented in such a way in the classroom that the student is perfectly clear when he leaves the classroom that "this is what my Church teaches on this point and this is also what my professor teaches." Contrary views, after presentation must be clearly rejected, so that the student understands that the teacher is not recommending any opinion, view, position or statement which is contrary to the synodical Publica Doctrina (Public Teaching). . . .

Departures and deviations from the *Publica Doctrina* (Public Teaching) of Synod become a matter of grave concern to the institution and Synod, and *must be dealt with.*

. . . Synod has no desire to stifle nor hinder legitimate professional research in any area of theology or other academic discipline. However, this research must be done in an orderly fashion and in accord with established procedures.

The results of scholarly research which run contrary to the *Publica Doctrina* (Public Teaching) of Synod must be brought to the attention of Synod in such a way that confusion and unrest are not caused in the congregations, the schools, and the Church at large, at home and abroad. Certain channels and procedures are to be followed by the researcher. . . .

How can Synod require such conformity to its *Publica Doctrina* (Public Teaching)?

1. Loyalty to Synod and its *Publica Doctrina* (Public Teaching) is a voluntary affirmation at the time of ordination, installation, or induction, and subscribing to the constitution of Synod.
2. The ordination vows are: "I believe the canonical books of the Old Testament and the New Testament to be the inspired Word of God and the only infallible rule of faith and practice. I accept the ecumenical creeds. I believe the Book of Concord to be in agreement with this one Scriptural faith. I promise . . . that all my teaching shall be in conformity with the Holy Scriptures and with the Confessions."
3. Faculty membership at Concordia has great privileges, but also some serious responsibilities which must be assumed. Among these are loyalty to the Scriptures and the Confessions; and in matters of dispute in Synod to the *Publica Doctrina* (Public Teaching) of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

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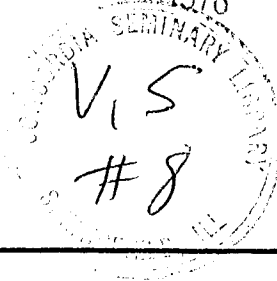
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"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"

2 Cor. 4:13

The Neunaber Case

FOR several years now eight district presidents of Missouri have consistently said they were not bound by the Constitution and Bylaws of their church.

They have openly upheld the broken agreements of their congregations, made when they became members of Missouri, and just as openly broken the vows they took when they themselves entered Missouri.

There can be no question about these facts; they themselves state them and act according to their statements.

They have acted against their church; they have caused confusion and consternation in her midst; and they have in no way shown any sign of repentance for what they have done to Missouri and have taken no action to reverse themselves and try to undo the damage Missouri has experienced.

There seems to be no need to recite their positions and actions with respect to ELIM, Seminex, ordination, and other matters. Nor does it seem necessary to explore once more the theology they use to support their acts, a deviant theology, especially with regard to God's Word, but often also in other matters. They interpret the Bible in ways never intended by God.

No church body can live confessionally so torn apart.

For that reason the Anaheim Convention voted a clear course of action for Missouri's president in dealing with these eight: it determined the pastoral, firm and loving procedure he was to follow with them.

The church at this convention stipulated that the president of Missouri was to deal pastorally with these eight and that, if he were unsuccessful, no later than 60 days before the district convention of a district headed by one of the eight, Missouri's top man was to declare the office of such a district president vacant. The clear language left him no options.

THE test case turned out to be that of Dr. Neunaber of the Southern Illinois District. Since its convention occurs some time late in February, Missouri's president had till about the 20th of December to carry out the will of Synod.

He did not do this.

In the early part of December he talked with Neunaber and others in the district and concluded that more counselling was necessary, that many lacked information or had distorted facts, and that a series of meetings on the circuit level should precede the convention in order to relieve tensions and to produce at the convention a harmony which will permit the district joyously to go forward again in Christ's mission.

Missouri's president stated, "Our primary purpose is to gain the brother, to conduct life together pastorally, and to take counsel and discuss together in an atmosphere of love and patience in an effort to retain the bond of mutual confidence which should prevail in a church body."

It is a laudable goal.

However, a decade of effort has gone into such conferring on many levels in dozens of committees and hundreds of meetings.

Moreover, the Anaheim resolution occurred in the early part of July; in view of Missouri's crisis, which presumably makes counselling with these eight one of the highest items on the president's agenda, it seems a little odd that he could not get around to this primary task for five months and, then only, when the nearness of the Southern Illinois convention no longer made it possible for him to avoid it.

The Neunaber case is the test case.

Were it properly carried to its conclusion according to the Anaheim resolution, the long, uphill struggle of conservatives in Missouri might, by grace, soon be successfully concluded.

ONE section of Missouri's governing documents may still give Missouri's president the power to vacate the office.

Does the Neunaber case indicate whether or not Missouri's president is as subject to the *Handbook* and the decisions of Synod as the lowliest member of the church?

Does he feel no more bound by the rulings of a convention than those who protest these decisions?

It may be that success will nevertheless occur in the Illinois case. However, seven more district presidents must be dealt with and, judging from their statements and actions, they will maintain the theological stance they have taken. What will Missouri's president do about them?

Meanwhile, several other observations seem appropriate.

Missouri's president apparently has added to the confusion in his own church body.

Moreover, it is difficult to believe, as he suggests, that a Southern Illinois resolution calling on all members of Synod to abide by its *Handbook* and decisions will have any far-reaching effect.

In addition, the long paragraph near the end of the president's letter to Neunaber, almost urging upon him the various avenues of proper dissent open to him and seemingly encouraging him to use them, will hardly be beneficial to Missouri.

Perhaps our current president can still lead us out of the morass into which Missouri has floundered. Pray God he will! Pray God to give him the strength of the convictions needed for that task!